

January - 25 Cents

SMART SET

True Stories
from
Real Life





ANN: My dear, you really should use Jarnac Face Powder. So soft—and my, how it stays on. Never tried the rouge, but the powder is the *best ever!*

BETTY: Thanks awfully. I've been consumed with curiosity as to why your skin looks so *soft* and *young*. I'd never be without the rouge, and must try the powder, too. Where can I buy it?

ANN: The drug store where you got the rouge has the powder, *Silly, for a dollar!*

If you want what you want, remember there is no "same thing" as Jarnac. If your druggist hasn't it, sent prepaid upon receipt of purchase price. JARNAC et CIE, 540 W. Randolph St., Chicago, U. S. A.



FREE

JARNAC et CIE 540 W. Randolph St.
Chicago

I would like a generous sample of Jarnac face powder, free, to see how altogether different a powder can be. Don't forget the little Jarnac book of big beauty secrets!

I would like also to try Jarnac rouge; and to know where I can buy it.

Name _____

Address _____

If you
want
what
you
want,
remember
there
is
no
"same
thing"
as
Jarnac.



It's a daughter's right to know— and a mother's duty to tell her

MOTHER and daughter. It is one of nature's closest kinships, yet how often is there a gulf between!

The responsibility is chiefly that of the older woman. When apart from her daughter, she is full of good resolutions, planning to speak frankly. But when they are together she finds it increasingly difficult to approach delicate subjects, made still more delicate by the old-fashioned custom of avoidance.

What a relief it would be to have at hand in convenient form accurate information bearing on the ever-present problems of health and cleanliness which affect all womankind. Information concerning the safe practice of feminine hygiene. Information on the dangers inherent in the use of poisonous compounds—dangers familiar to every nurse and physician.

No need to run risks with the skull-and-crossbones

At one time there was some excuse for the use of poisonous

germicides such as bichloride of mercury and compounds of carbolic acid—because there was nothing to take their place.

But now Science has provided an answer to the age-old question of fastidious women, who demand complete surgical cleanliness and complete safety in use. Science has provided Zonite.

Zonite is the great antiseptic germicide which has not only removed the dangers of burning, poisonous fluids in the practice of feminine hygiene, but has also removed the danger of accidental poisoning in the home.

Compare Zonite's strength with carbolic acid

Though absolutely non-poisonous, Zonite is actually far more powerful germicidally than any dilution of carbolic acid that can be applied to the human body. And compared with peroxide of

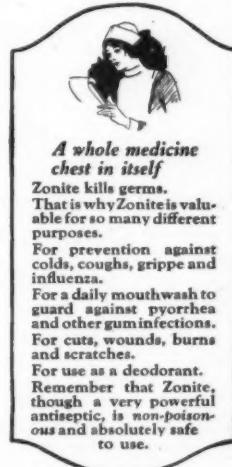
hydrogen, for instance, Zonite is *more than forty times as effective!* No wonder Zonite has been welcomed by the medical profession and is being prescribed by dentists everywhere as a mouthwash. Think of a powerful germicide safe to use for a mouthwash!

Whole subject covered in booklet

The Women's Division has prepared a special booklet on Feminine Hygiene and other affairs of the toilet. It is frank, scientific, and convenient. Send for it. Read it. It is a booklet every mother will want to give her daughter. It is an important booklet and free. Use the coupon below.

Zonite Products Company
Postum Bldg., 250 Park Ave.
New York, N. Y.

In Canada: 165 Dufferin St., Toronto



Women's Division

ZONITE
PRODUCTS CO.
Postum Building
250 Park Avenue
New York, N. Y.

I should like to have a free copy of the illustrated booklet you have prepared. (S-81)

Name.....

Address.....

In bottles, 50c and \$1
at drug stores

Slightly higher in Canada

If your druggist cannot supply you, send 50c direct to the Zonite Products Co.

Zonite

VOL. 77
NO. 5

SMART SET

JANUARY
1926

True Stories from Real Life

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Although manuscripts and drawings are submitted at the owners' risk, every effort will be made to return those found unavailable



Chance

Chance is the most powerful element of life. It makes reputations—and breaks them.

In the February issue we are giving you the story of a little French girl who didn't play the game as we play it in America.

But experience teaches, and that seems to be the only road toward wisdom for some folks. It is this same experience that burns its lessons upon souls—and she learned the lesson which is as old as civilization:

FIRE BURNS.

Published monthly by the Magus Magazine Corporation, at 119 West 40th Street, New York, N. Y., U. S. A.

R. E. BERLIN, President and Treasurer; JOHN BRENNAN, Vice-President; R. T. MONAGHAN, Secretary.

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What Will You be Earning One Year from Today?

A practical plan that is doubling men's salaries

You have said good-bye to Yesterday, with its failures and disappointments. A new Tomorrow lies ahead of you. What are you going to do with it?

To the man who gives little thought to his business progress, one day is much like another—filled with routine work—rewarded by routine pay. He has no right to expect great things of the future.

But—how different the outlook of the man who is *training* for promotion, and what a difference a mere twelve months can make in his earning power!

Give a thought, for instance, to the experience of S. N. Williams, a Kentucky man, who has specialized—with the co-operation of LaSalle Extension University—in *Salesmanship*. "My salary was practically doubled a short time ago," writes Williams, "but my greatest satisfaction comes from knowing that the amount of business I have written this year is easily five times greater than before." Williams, you see, has a *real future*—because he is constantly *preparing* for it.

Increases Salary 150%

Again, consider the experience of Arthur W. Weber, now Assistant Secretary of the Ohio Savings Bank and Trust Company, one of the largest and most influential banks in the state. One of his earlier letters reads as follows:

"Since I have been training, my salary has been increased 150 per cent. This increase is an annual return of 1,107 per cent upon my investment. Not so bad when you consider that most conservative investments net only 6 or 8 per cent. Incidentally, LaSalle training has aided me in jumping from the job of timekeeper in an automobile factory to my present position as assistant auditor of the largest and best bank in Toledo in less than eighteen months.

"There is one outstanding point about

LaSalle Extension University—it is not your excellent text-books or your well-built organization, but your willingness to help and encourage the student to succeed. It has been my experience that an enrollment with you is not a cold-blooded business proposition, but a real, cheerful, sympathetic willingness to help the student."

More recently he writes as follows: "Monthly dividends are being paid me on my investment in LaSalle training in



the form of increased salary at a rate in excess of 125 per cent per month."

You Have the Same Good Opportunity

Skeptics may suggest that the records of Mr. Williams and Mr. Weber are exceptional. And—if these men had won their advancement *without* the aid of home-study training, we should be bound to agree with the skeptics. For men are rarely promoted to positions they are not qualified to fill. When men have fitted themselves for advancement, however, such promotions are not exceptional at all.

That their experience could be paralleled

many, many times is evidenced by the fact that during only six months' time as many as 1,248 LaSalle members reported definite salary-increases, as a result of training under the LaSalle Problem Method, totaling \$1,399,507. *The average increase per man was 89 per cent.*

The records of these 1,248 members—representing every state in the Union and every province of Canada—are all recounted in a fascinating book entitled "A Geography of Success." The following are a few of the promotions here recorded:

"From \$110 to \$385 a month."

"Clerk to Branch Manager, at \$10,000 a year."

"Salesman to Sales Manager; salary doubled."

"From \$1,400 to \$5,000 a year."

"Passes C. P. A. examination; now partner in \$20,000 firm."

A copy of this book will be sent you for the asking. And—it's well worth sending for!

Send for Salary Doubling Plan—Free

Yesterday is past. Let's not be hampered by it. Tomorrow is ahead of us. *Let's make the most of it!*

Below this text there's a coupon—just such a coupon as Williams and Weber once signed, and hundreds of thousands of others who, thru home-study training, have added greatly to their earning power.

You know your ambitions. They will decide for you the training you should undertake.

You do not know your *capabilities*. But—they will unfold for you more wonderfully than you could dare to hope, once you begin with seriousness to fit yourself for bigger things.

Start today toward that better place, that bigger salary, by checking, signing and mailing the coupon NOW.

LA SALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY

The World's Largest Business Training Institution

CLIP AND MAIL

LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY

Dept. 150-R

Chicago

I shall be glad to have details of your salary-doubling plan, together with complete information regarding the opportunities in the business field I have checked below. Also a copy of "A Geography of Success," all without obligation.

<input type="checkbox"/> Business Management: Training for Official, Managerial, Sales and Departmental Executive positions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Law: Training for Bar; LL. B. Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Management: Training for positions in Works Management, Production Control, Industrial Engineering, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Modern Salesmanship: Training for position as Sales Executive, Salesman, Sales Coach or Trainer, Sales Promotion Manager, Merchandise Agent, Salesperson and all other positions in retail, wholesale, or specialty selling.	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Law: Reading, Reference and Consultation Service for Business Men.	<input type="checkbox"/> Modern Foresmanship and Production Methods: Training for positions in Shop Management, such as that of Superintendent, General Foreman, Foreman, Sub-Foreman, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Higher Accountancy: Training for position as Auditor, Controller, Certified Public Accountant, Cost Accountant, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Railway Station Management: Training for position of Station Accountant, Cashier and Agent, Division Agent, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Personnel and Employment Management: Training in the position of Personnel Manager, Industrial Relations Manager, Employment Manager, and positions relating to Employee Service.
<input type="checkbox"/> Expert Bookkeeping: Training for position as Head Bookkeeper.	<input type="checkbox"/> Banking and Finance: Training for executive positions in Banks and Financial Institutions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Modern Business Correspondence and Practice: Training for position as Sales or Collection Correspondent, Sales Promotion Manager, Mail Sales Manager, Secretary, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> C. P. A. Coaching for Advanced Accountants.		<input type="checkbox"/> Business English: Training for Business Correspondents and Copy Writers.
		<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Spanish: Training for position as Foreign Correspondent with Spanish-speaking countries.
		<input type="checkbox"/> Effective Speaking: Training in the art of formal, effective speech, for Ministers, Salesmen, Fraternal Leaders, Politicians, Clubmen, etc.

Name

Present Position

Address



B.W.COKE
Directing
Engineer



I
GIVE
YOU
4
OUTFITS
FREE
of any extra charge

There is not enough room on this page to properly show you the 4 wonderful Big Outfits I am including. They are free of Extra charge. Includes: fine set of Master Mechanic's Tools—Self-sharpening Tool Bag—Portable Electrical Test Bench and Radio Receiving Set, all equipment—also 293 Wiring Diagram Charts. Mail Coupon at once and I'll send you full particulars.

Address me
Personally

B. W. Cooke Directing
Engineer
CHICAGO MOTOR TRAINING CORPORATION

1916-1926 Sunnyside Ave.,

Dept. 137

Chicago, Ill.

Clip coupon for
that Free
Auto Book

Get a Raise in Pay

QUICK!

If you want BIG PAY, and want it QUICK, Clip that Coupon for my Big Free Auto Book right now. I'll also send you a copy of the QUICKEST WAY toward the Auto Experts' Jobs, paying up to \$150 a week and more! I'll give you amazing facts about this business. B. W. Cooke "JOB WAY" Training which has doubled and tripled the incomes of men all over the country in just a few short months after enrolling.



See How
Quick "Job
Way" Brought
These Men Big
Raises in Pay!

Here's the kind of Results that count! These men didn't have to wait until they finished my training to make Big Money. They started making money quick!

Just think of this! ONLY 12 WEEKS after enrolling with me, Student Ernest E. Tucker, Cotton, Minn., was in his own business.

Three weeks later he wrote me that he had had to put on 2 helpers and had made \$215 IN A SINGLE WEEK! He gives my training full credit for such Quick Results!

\$225 a WEEK JOB-WAY takes Rumpel out of the \$33 a WEEK class. QUICK

honestly say that I owe my wonderful success to your wonderful "JOB-WAY."

Dillard Had 14 Years Auto Experience - Alveras Had None. "Job-Way" Boosted Both of Their Incomes Quick!

Men with years of Experience—men without a day's Auto Experience—educated men—and men with only common schooling master my training quickly and easily—and both their incomes QUICK! Guest

Alveras, Box 142, Parkerton, Wyo., a foreigner with little education, was an ordinary \$18 a week railroad laborer when he enrolled with me—with no experience and no money. After 6 Months later his salary was boosted to \$50 a week

"JOB-WAY" behind you.

Gust Alveras Foreigner with little education boosts salary from \$18 a week to \$50 a week QUICK

With B. W. Cooke "JOB-WAY" Auto Training you can start out for Big Pay and QUICK RAISES Right on Your Own Home. Loan me a half hour of your spare time, a few evenings a week, and I'll give you the training you need to become a Big Pay Man—and show you the way to make money QUICK! B. W. Cooke "JOB-WAY" Training includes all Electrical Work—All Mechanical End—Welding, Braizing, Vulcanizing—also Business Courses—Sales—Advertising—How to Keep Simple Books—Automotive Magazine, also 4 Wonderful Outfits.

A Little of Your Spare Time Is All I Need

As Directing Engineer, Owner and Head of this Big Institution, I know what training you need. That training I give you. That I have trained men at home for quick success in the Auto Business than any other man or Institution in the world. I am America's first Instructor to hit so straight and hard at QUICK RESULTS for you! No other training I know of justifies it.

Be An AUTO EXPERT
The World's Biggest Business Needs You

Get in the business where results come QUICK! This Auto Business is the one Business for the red-blooded, he-man, the man who wants to make Big Money and make it QUICK! Before you do another thing, you ought to find out about this stupendous business—it's amazing opportunities—and what even great Auto Businesses have done! That's "JOB-WAY" money can be made so quick! Thousands of B. W. Cooke "JOB-WAY" trained men badly need opportunities to go into business and make up to \$10,000 a year and more. Send for my Free Book now!

**Keep Your Present Job
You Don't Have to Leave Home!**

With B. W. Cooke "JOB-WAY" Auto Training you can start out for Big Pay and QUICK RAISES Right on Your Own Home. Loan me a half hour of your spare time, a few evenings a week, and I'll give you the training you need to become a Big Pay Man—and show you the way to make money QUICK! B. W. Cooke "JOB-WAY" Training includes all Electrical Work—All Mechanical End—Welding, Braizing, Vulcanizing—also Business Courses—Sales—Advertising—How to Keep Simple Books—Automotive Magazine, also 4 Wonderful Outfits. Send Coupon Now for particulars.

want you to remember that B. W. Cooke is in no way connected with any other person or Institution of similar name. Nowhere else can you get the original, genuine, copyrighted "JOB-WAY" Training—get all the details of this QUICK RESULTS TRAINING today! Send for my Free Book.

**I Help You
Get the Good Jobs!**

I back you up with the entire resources of this Big Institution. I help you get good Jobs through my Lifetime Employment Department—give you Lifetime Consultation Service as long as you live, absolutely Free! As long as you live, a charge. See what my students write of this wonderful department. Get the full details. Send Coupon Now.

Send for My FREE Auto Book

If you act quick I'll send you absolutely free, the same remarkable book that has shown thousands the way to QUICK RAISES IN PAY—BIG JOBS paying up to \$150 a week—and money making Businesses of their own where up to \$10,000 a year and more is easily made!

MAIL THIS JOB-WAY COUPON

B. W. Cooke Directing
Engineer

Chicago Motor Training Corporation
1916 Sunnyside Ave., Dept. 137, Chicago, Ill.

Dear Mr. Cooke:

Send me your Big Book "AUTO FACTS" Absolutely Free. Also send me "JOB-WAY" that will show me the Quick Way to get in line for a BIG JOB and a RAISE IN PAY. Also full particulars of your BIG 4 Outfit Offer. It is understood that this obligates me in no way and no salesman is to call on me.

Name.....

Address.....



Photograph by
Paul Thompson

I Can Teach You to Sing Like This!

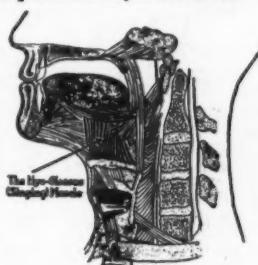
—Eugene Feuchtinger

I do *not* mean I can make a Caruso out of every man—or a Mary Garden out of every woman,—but

I can teach you in a few short months a basic secret of voice development which Caruso discovered only after years of persistent effort.

HERE IS THE SECRET!

This is a picture of the human throat, showing the all important Hyo-Glossus muscle. Biographers of the great Caruso tell us of his wonderful tongue control. Caruso himself speaks of it in his own writings, as the basic secret of vocal power and beauty. But tongue control depends entirely on the development of your Hyo-Glossus muscle.



The Hyo-Glossus in your throat can be strengthened just as surely as you can strengthen the muscles of your arm—by exercise.

Professor Eugene Feuchtinger, noted vocal scientist, famous in Europe before coming to America, was the first man to isolate and teach a method of developing the Hyo-Glossus.

If you are ambitious to sing or speak, or merely improve your voice for social or business purposes, here is your opportunity. If you suffer from stammering, stuttering or other vocal defect, here is a sound, scientific method of relief. Under the guidance of Prof. Feuchtinger himself, you can practice these wonderful silent exercises in the

privacy of your own home. For Physical Voice Culture is ideally adapted to instruction by correspondence.

100% Improvement Guaranteed

Thousands of men and women have already received the benefits of Physical Voice Culture. If you will practice faithfully, your entire satisfaction is guaranteed. In fact, if your voice is not doubled in power and beauty, your money will be refunded. You alone are to be the judge.

Free Book Send today for the wonderful new book, "Physical Voice Culture". It will open your eyes to the possibilities of your own voice. It will indeed be a revelation to you. Get it without fail. Mail the coupon now.

Perfect Voice Institute 1922 Sunnyside Avenue, Studio 20-61 Chicago, Ill.

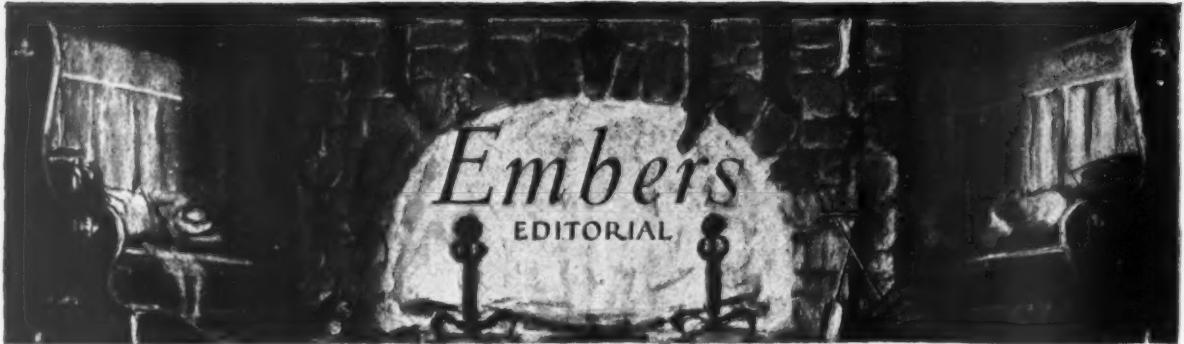
Perfect Voice Institute, 1922 Sunnyside Ave., Studio, 20-61 Chicago
Please send me FREE, your new book, "Physical Voice Culture". I have put X opposite the subject that interests me most. I assume no obligations whatever.

Singing Speaking Stammering Weak Voice

Name.....

Address.....

..... Age.....



THE open hearth has come to be a symbol of home life in America. It quickens the imagination and brings back memories of a past which is gone its way but is still recent enough to hold our fancy. The dancing yellow flames which creep up the logs, the odor of burning wood, the crackling noise, the warmth all help us to dream of the years which we have watched slipping away into the past.

It is a busy world, a harsh, unrelenting world in its humdrum grind. We are forced to do battle with the elements for our food; to rob the mountains of their cores for heat; to hollow out the inmost portions for our steel. Somehow we are apt to forget what little kindness we might have time to show to others as the days slip by.

And it took the birthday of Christ to make a world pause and turn its thoughts to making others happy. What a pity that we cannot have at all times the feeling of good will and brotherhood that comes at Christmas time.

All history is strewn with the embers of Christmas fires. Not ordinary flames which serve to heat a room and die away when it has been done; but rather leaping, living fires in the open hearths of a whole world, flames which bid welcome to friends and stranger alike and which bring with them a warmth which means peace to all the earth.

THE yule log is a symbol we have loved for years, even for centuries. Santa Claus has come to stand for the very spirit which tries to make other people happy. Such a figure could never have been created by any other spirit than that of sacrifice.

The custom of exchanging gifts has a beautiful significance to Christians. To others who have taken up the customs without realizing what lies behind them—it sometimes seems

foolish, or useless. I don't see why they do it at all. Those who know the deep significance of it will always love to continue.

In these legendary customs which have grown up amongst the American people in a manner differing from those in any other country we have turned back the pages of time for a moment to the land of make-believe in which we all lived as children.

Dreams are as real to a child with a vivid imagination as are his school, his meals, and his playmates. Indians lurk in his own imaginary woods, and he is honestly afraid of them. Santa Claus is a patron saint, and the person who breaks his faith in that idol is a brute.

AS we grow in mental as well as physical stature, we will naturally grow into the ideas of just what legend is and what it means, and why Santa Claus lives—in everyone of us. Then there is no disillusionment or doubt and no crashing of beautiful castles in the air.

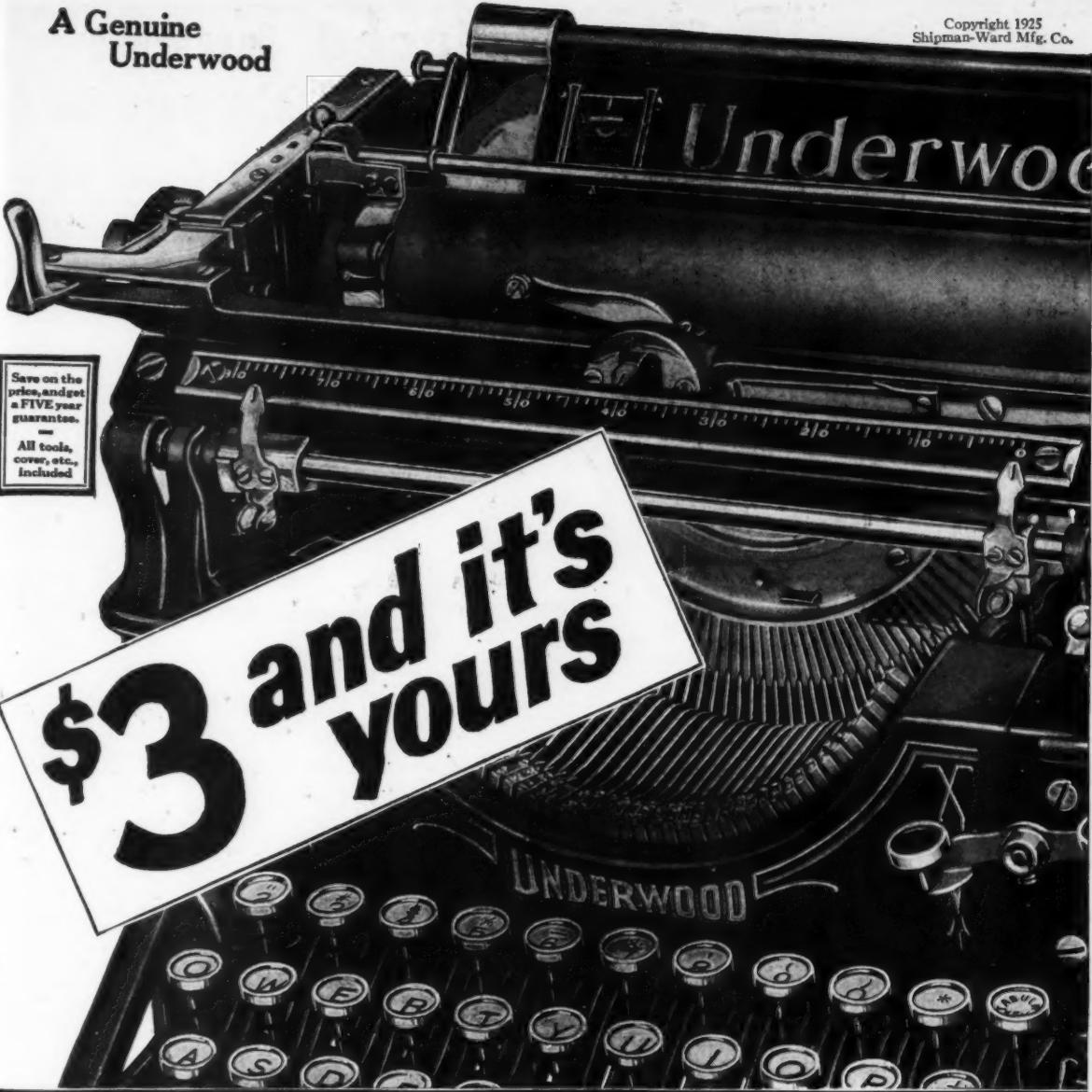
Life is filled with children still living their dreams. The stage is a place of dream castles where grown-up children play at being kings. The chautauquas and lyceums are things fashioned of air where one man stimulates the imaginations of his listeners.

SMART SET is a dream world—not a land of make-believe but of reality—where you may be whisked away to the far corners of the earth and breathe the romance of a tropic night, and tread the ice-bound coast of Alaska.

And it's Christmas time now. That's why we are all drawing closer to each other. We realize how much we all mean to each other. And when that spirit creeps in there doesn't seem to be much that we can say, except one thing, the thing that SMART SET wishes for you all—"A MERRY CHRISTMAS."

A Genuine
Underwood

Copyright 1925
Shipman-Ward Mfg. Co.



Own a Typewriter!



**Act NOW, and Get a FREE Trial of this
ACE of Writing Machines!**

Speak up, if you want one! Underwood typewriters are so popular this lot we're completing now won't be long in selling! Rebuilt from top to bottom—*every single worn part replaced*. New typewriters are guaranteed for a year; we guarantee this one *five years*! That's our Better-Than-New Guarantee. And we guarantee a big saving!

You can learn to write on this standard-keyboard Underwood in a day. In a week, you'll feel lost

without it! The free trial will *prove* it. Our rebuilt plan gives you the best machine and a *big saving*!

Don't send a cent, but do get our special offer—valuable book on typewriting—*free*.

Pay Like Rent

Three dollars puts this Underwood in your home—small monthly payments soon make it yours for good if you want to keep it—but send no money now. Just get our offer. Clip and mail coupon. There's no excuse now for not owning a typewriter—and the finest make!

We include all tools, cover, etc., all complete, all ready to write. Write us now. Deal direct; we are the largest factory of the kind.

Get our catalog free; quotes lowest prices and most liberal terms in existence. We'll send a manual free, too; it contains valuable instruction for learning rapid typing, useful pointers for all who use a typewriter.

**FREE NEW, BIG BOOK
ON TYPEWRITER**

SHIPMAN-WARD MFG. CO.
3821 Shipman Bldg., Chicago.

Please send **FREE**, full offer, catalog, typing manual, and outline your free course in Touch Typewriting, without obligation!

Name _____
Street or R. F. D. _____
P. O. _____ State _____

FREE
JOB
SERVICE
for
Students
and
Graduates



I will train you
AT HOME for a
better job and a big raise
in pay! — Chief Engineer Dunlap

If you are now earning less than \$40 a week, better go into Electricity where Experts earn from \$60 to \$200 a week! All you need to succeed—BIG in Electricity is honest training, such as I give you at home in your spare time. Men with only common schooling can quickly master my new, simplified Job-Method of instruction. And you can, too!

Training Built by 23 Noted Engineers

This is not a one-man, one-idea school. 22 famous Engineers and Executives of the following corporations and universities helped me make Dunlap-training complete and up-to-date.

1. General Electric Co.
2. Commonwealth Edison
3. Crocker-Wheeler Co.
4. Cutler-Hammer
5. American Tel. & Tel. Co.
6. Westingh. El. & Mfg. Co.
7. Western Electric Co.
8. Underwriter's Lab., Inc.
9. Columbia University
10. Dartmouth College
11. Massachusetts Inst.
12. Lehigh University
13. University of Vermont
- AND MANY OTHERS

Many Extras, But No Extra Cost!

The first half of my training is Applied Electricity, a complete course in itself. In the second half I give you Electrical Engineering subjects, Electrical Drafting, Automotive Electricity, Radio, Business Management—all at one small price, and on easy terms!

4 Costly Outfits Given

Electricity is easy to learn by the Dunlap Job-

Method, because I send you standard tools and materials and put you to work on actual Electrical jobs from the very beginning. First you learn bell-wiring, electric light house-wiring—and when you're expert I issue you a WIREMAN'S CARD so you can go out and make money soon after enrolling. Four big outfitts in all. One is a fine Radio Set. Another is this \$10 Motor. The same type as the big fellows in a power plant. It's sent knock-down. You wind the field and armature, assemble it, change it over to a generator. That's the way you learn every branch of Electricity here! That's why Burgkart has no trouble in placing my students and graduates in fine positions at good pay.

Mail Coupon quick for free book, guarantee and special offers

CHIEF ENGINEER DUNLAP

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL
Dept. E-1251, Drexel Ave. & 58th St., CHICAGO

"I have placed hundreds of Electrical Experts in fine jobs"

by A. H. Burgkart, Employment Manager

Get ready for these fine

JOBS

ELECTRICAL EXPERTS WANTED

POWER - PLANT SUPERINTENDENT wanted, for Middle West light and power property. Fairly good technical education required. Also ability to handle twenty to thirty men necessary. (Name on request.)

DISTRIBUTION Superintendent wanted in town of 10,000 people. Must have experience in operating and maintenance. Location in New England. (Name on request.)

ELECTRICAL EXPERT

experienced in mechanical and electrical installations, repairs, tests, plant construction and operation wanted for Florida. (Name on request.)

MAINTENANCE MAN WANTED to handle all maintenance work for a group of sub-stations; must be able to make routine tests, inspections and repairs to all substation equipment, such as relays, grounds, arresters, transformers, oil switches, etc.; only man accustomed to such responsibility as this will be considered; location Southern states; reply giving complete outline of education and experience with references. (Name on request.)

CHIEF ELECTRICIAN WANTED For his hotel now under construction. Must understand maintenance, installation and repairs of large privately owned plant. Executive ability essential. (Name on request.)

Illumination Design Man

Experienced in industrial, commercial and special lighting work in large central station property operating in Eastern Ohio and Western Pennsylvania. Give age, experience, salary expected and when available. (Name on request.)

This \$10.00 Motor Given



A. H. Burgkart,
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VOL. 55
NO. 5

SMART SET

True Stories from Real Life

JANUARY
1926



Jinglin' Bells

By HARRY LEE

THE matron in the Orphan's Home told us there ain't no Santy Claus! I just put up my hand and snapped, and shook it, too, I did, because There is a Santy! And one time I seen him! Then the matron said: "Yes, Thomas, you may speak," and so I told how, 'fore my mother's dead, And we were fast asleep, we heard bells jinglin', and there right below Our bedroom window, Santy was—Old Santy dancin' in the snow— Long whiskers blowin', and his nose all red, and fat he was, and oh! The bumpy pack he had, with toys—engines and ever'thing, you know, And drums! And he lift up his face, and wave at us, and laugh, and call: "A Merry Christmas, little Tom—A Merry Christmas to you all!"

I 'VE wrote him 'bout the Orphans Home;
I hope he finds the way out here!
It's awful far from where home was;
I had my mother, see, last year!
Boy, won't we jump and run to hear
The jinglin' bells! And then he'll call:
"A Merry Christmas, little Tom—
A Merry Christmas to you all!"



Pin Cushions

By DR. FRANK

THIS morning, walking along the street," records Havelock Ellis, "I came on a girl with her skirts well raised above her knees, pulling up and adjusting her stocking. As I approached she glanced up and then resumed her operation."

"Posterity," he adds, "might regard this as a singularly insignificant incident which only an imbecile could mention."

"But posterity cannot know that in the European world wherein I lived for more than half a century that little act was almost revolutionary."

"In the world I knew, whenever a woman wanted to pull up her stocking she retired into a dark corner, or at least turned her shame-faced countenance closely to the wall."

Havelock Ellis has put his finger upon one of the evidences of revolutionary change going on in the world.

In an album of old New York photographs the other day I saw a picture of Lillian Russell walking down Fifth Avenue. She was wearing billows and fluffs and yards and yards of cloth. This reigning beauty of the time looked like an animated pin cushion out for an airing.

That was the style that modesty decreed. But the bustle and the crinoline have taken the way of the saber-toothed tiger and the great auk.

For this alone the much maligned younger generation deserves a vote of thanks.

The pendulum swings from extreme to extreme in every cause. It probably will swing too far in the direction of freedom, but in the end it is bound to settle down to a period of greater sense and sincerity in the matter of dress.

and Bare Knees

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One of the feeblest arguments against modern dress is that it endangers feminine health.

An official of the Prudential Insurance Company says the mothers who warned daughters that they were ruining their health by wearing insufficient clothing are all wrong, because the girls are decidedly healthier today than ever before.

Indeed college statistics show that the women students are healthier than the men. It is the dominant male who at present is bundled up to the enfeeblement of his constitution.

IN PARIS the other day a group of men started the fad of wearing a new style of shirt that left their throats bare. A Paris doctor commented succinctly that because of the way they had bundled up before they probably would all be dead from pneumonia in six months.

Havelock Ellis goes on to illustrate the advance in common sense during the past fifty years—or perhaps it is only a change in mental attitude in the past generation on the question of prudishness—by two incidents:

A woman of the past generation in Italy refused to come out from a burning building because she could not find her clothes. She preferred to die rather than appear on the street unattired.

In the World War a hospital ship was torpedoed and began to sink. One of the Red Cross nurses stripped off her clothes with the words, "Excuse me, boys, but I've got to save the 'Tommies.' "





"... your name here on the book—and 'Smith' has been overdone, remember. Happy will take care of you."

No Crook Worth His Salt

THE BOWERY was sweltering in the blazing sun and yet it was not dead. Shabby, drifting, hopeless men brushed shoulders with hurrying, well-dressed youth and coatless, perspiring shopkeepers. The girls, too. It was a day to think of them as I sat upon my worn stone steps, partially protected from the relentless, glaring heat that seemed to rise, sizzling, from the pavements. Gayly colored, spotless frocks; shining, happy faces; independent, self-reliant chins below well-kept teeth; and eyes just sparkling with the very joy of living. This was the new womanhood that we so often hear derided. Hard to understand, that. If cleanliness is next to godliness, surely this was a step up the ladder from the old days when rags and dirt, carelessness and indifference, cast their shadows from the clothes without to the body within—to the soul too, I guess.

There is something fascinating about the great, broad Avenue, made famous by song and verse; infamous by lurid newspaper stories and the derelicts of the world. For years I have seen the Bowery change—since before

I served my term—grasped the real purpose of man on earth, and established my mission house for those others who have paid the price of crime. A model, upright, business community by day, that gives place again at night to those fleeting shadows of the past—those lurking vultures of the dark who have caused the poor and the needy, the uneducated and the weak, and even the coming great men of our country to be classed with the criminal and the underworld. This smug, inherited respectability of the upper city, who call the homes of the poor "The Slums"—one word only divides them from those whom they pity or scorn; one word only separates the devil's rich and God's poor—ENVIRONMENT.

Tough words, they—perhaps—but I feel strongly on the subject, too strongly, maybe, to get it into words. But it's there, beating inside of me some place, gripping at me then, as I held my knee between my hands and swung back and forth upon the top step. A nod here, a smile there, and a word or two with laughing youth and despondent old age. They all know me. Doc Fay, or



Some MEN Tell

A Story of the
Bitterest Struggle
in the World of
Passion and Greed

Could Look Like That, Unless—

Doctor, or mostly just Doc, and sometimes The Bible-
Stiff; respect and derision, I get it both ways. I've got a
duty as I see it—just a battle against environment.

A car drives up—a big, open expensive looking affair—and the man in the back has a boyish smile and a boyish spring to his heels as he hops to the pavement and dashes up the steps toward me. It's a proud moment for me, that. Ten years ago Duke Fitzgerald had been climbing porches, mostly at night. He had come to me; here was the result.

"I've got news for you, Doc—great news." He just can't get it out fast enough. That's the boy in him yet; the right thinking that's made for big business and not the wrong thinking that's made for back fences. "They're going to make me vice-president. Think of it, man!" His hand came down between my shoulders. "Vice-president of the Consolidated Realty Co., and—I owe it all to you. Pinch me—see if I'm dreaming!"

"I pinched you ten years ago," I told him. "That's all you owe to me. You've been awake ever since. How's

the romance going?" His talk had been of marriage the last time I saw him.

A slight frown—then:

"Not so good, Doc; in fact, bad. It isn't fair to the girl. I should have listened to your advice years ago—told the truth and taken the punishment. She don't know—no one in the Company knows I'm—well, what I am."

SOME men tell and some men don't." I shook my head. "That's between you and your conscience, Duke. You've paid your price, served your term, and you've earned the right to happiness. Every cent you ever took from anyone has gone back. I know—I've been your agent in returning it. In my opinion, Duke, you've made your peace with God and man; now make it with the girl. If she loves you, if she's big and good and carries her heart in the right place, she'll understand."

"I can't tell her—somehow, I just can't. Oh, I'm carrying a load, Doc—a load that even you can't lighten." A smile now—but it slipped through the side of his

mouth and dimmed, rather than brightened, his eyes. "I guess I haven't earned the right to happiness; there's still that haunting hand of the years that have gone."

But I couldn't see it his way, and I told him so. To me, the man who has paid and gone straight is a good step above the one who still owes, and waits to make his peace with God until the day when he can hide nothing and his puny, scheming little brain, that has fooled men, is thrown open in the great book of time.

Duke Fitzgerald was thinking backward some place—or the girl wasn't worthy. But the secret of his past was his, not mine. He had come to me, a broken, half-defiant, half-repentant man. That he had been a criminal—that he had been within the wall of the Big House—was all that I knew. What he told me was buried forever. When the time came to give it to the world or to the girl, Duke must decide, not me. His rise had been entirely his own; his first job with the Consolidated, of his own making. When I place a man I tell his boss the truth. No later disclosures then, no sudden ruin, on the very edge of success. And Duke—I had placed fourteen men so far in his concern. Pride is human—I try to drown it, but there's a swelling inside at times; each one of these men had made good.

BUT Duke was making his own punishment; he just stood there and shook his head.

"I can't rake up the past." There was a note of finality in his voice. "I'm doing all I can to keep it buried." Then the real thing that was on his chest slipped out. He leaned far over and whispered it, though the door behind me was closed and the street practically deserted. "It's Blazer Johnson," he said. "Blackmail, Doc—and a dishonest bit of graft on the city."

I smiled up at him. Blazer Johnson was a product of the old political school. For years I had known that he knew of Duke's past and would hound him at the first opportunity. And I had taken care of this same Blazer Johnson—just a letter written to a convict who had done his dirty work; a convict who had come to me—one who was now assistant purser on one of the big ocean liners. I had placed him back on the sea and he had made good. Blazer had threatened him, tried to bring him back to the old life—even gone to the president of the Steamship Company. But the president was a man—I had told him the truth—and my say went further than Blazer's. Enough! I had a letter that would send Blazer up for a good ten years. And Blazer knew it. He and I had had our little talk.

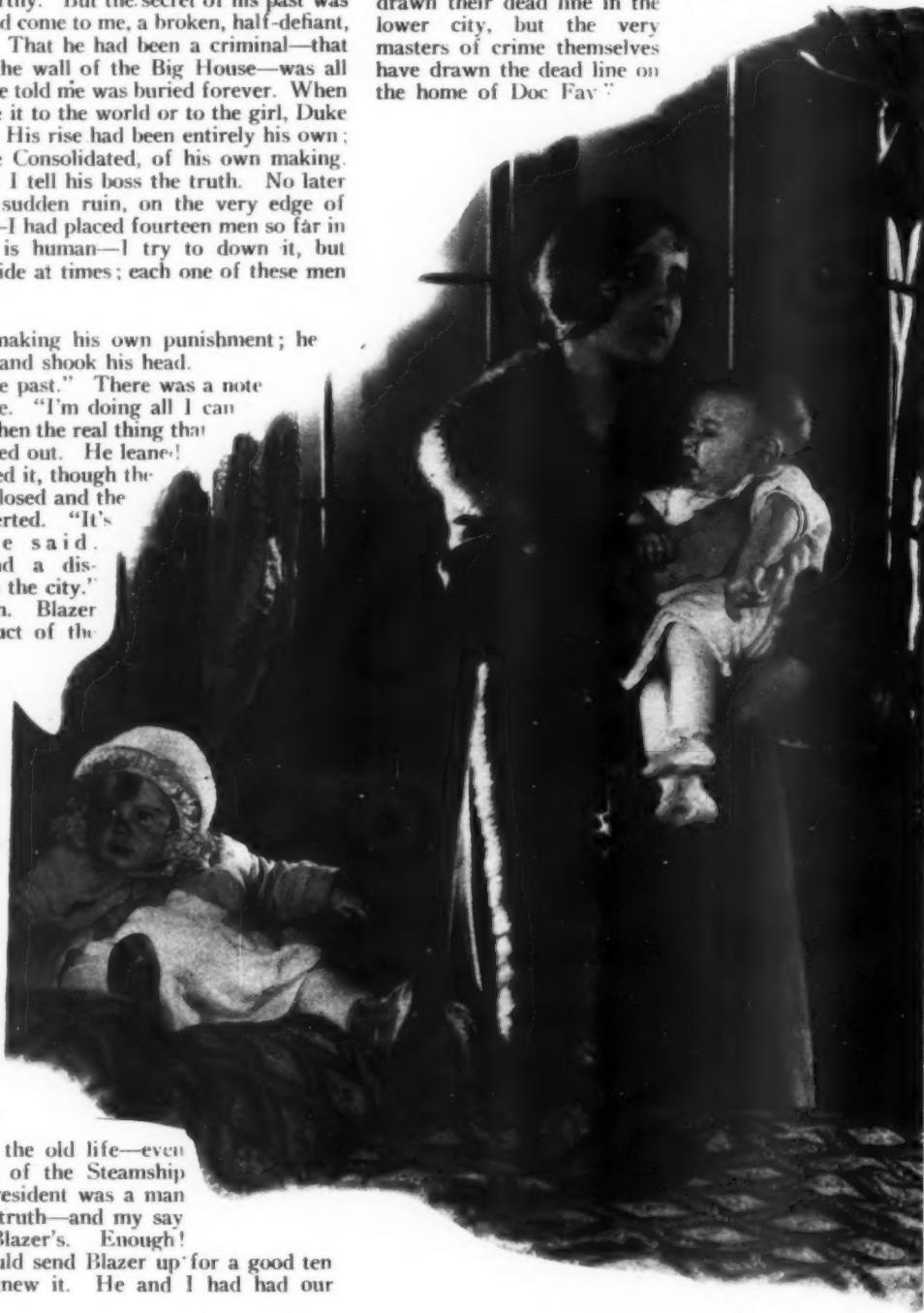
"Blazer's threats are dead ones," I said easily. "We've had our talk. His letter is snugly in the back of my safe."

"Good." Duke nods. "But Blazer needs me. I could

pass a deal on the city that would set him—and just now he's hard pressed for money. He'd do anything to get me. Watch that letter, Doc."

My smile should have reassured him.

"My house is full of men who have paid the price of environment, yet the letter is safe; not one would touch a thing. An outsider like Blazer could never get in. If he hired a crook low enough, why, the boys, Duke—I'd be hard set to stop murder then. Besides, a crook mean enough wouldn't have guts enough. The police have drawn their dead line in the lower city, but the very masters of crime themselves have drawn the dead line on the home of Doc Fav."



I don't suppose she understood why I had sent her the three boarders, and I know she was more curious about where they came from.

"I guess you're right, Doc." But the frown did not lift. Then, like a sudden burst of the sun through dark clouds, it came—that boyish grin of his. "Doc, I nearly forgot what I came for. It's the dinner. The president of the Consolidated and the directors are giving me a send off at the end of the month—the thirtieth. I take office on the first—sort of an inaugural celebration; and I want you to come—you must come."

"Of course." I nodded at that. "I'll be there, Duke. I want to see you get all the honors coming to you—but will I fit?"



"You'll fit anywhere, Doc—and that goes even for Judgment Day." Then more seriously, "I had a close call, Doc—got the job by inches. Edgars was slated for it. Tough. I feel sorry for him. Edgars is a real man—expected the job for years, I guess."

"If he's a real man he'll know you deserve it." I could see that bothered him. "And I'll be there, Duke." I wrote the date and the occasion down in my little book.

"And the last thing, Doc." All his boyish enthusiasm had returned now. "A check, Doc—here, slant your glims on that." He slipped a folded bit of paper into my hand. "To help the boys, Doc. I'd like to see a swimming pool here some day—sort of that 'cleanliness business' you rave about."

TWO thousand. A little step, isn't it, Duke?" Each summer for nearly five years now he had handed me a check for a thousand dollars.

"That's the point," he chuckled. "Rallston, the president, was talking over with me the strain of steady charities. I told him of my pet one. He wants to add to his list—that's the extra thousand; we'll have a swimming pool as deep as the Atlantic." His hand again came down on my shoulder. "And that's that, Doc—a directors' meeting," he turned and despite the heat and his bulk, leaped down the steps and sped across the sidewalk, "six-thirty, them—on the thirtieth." And he was gone, the great car slipping noiselessly over the burning stones.

I didn't get time to thank him—didn't get another chance to sound him out on the girl. A figure had been watching us—a shabby, unshaven man whose sunken eyes steadily observed us from under a cheap but well-kept hat.

There was no spring to his gait as he crossed the street and shuffled slowly past my door, but those deep, sunken eyes took in the number above my head and my own person upon the steps. Twice more he passed, but I did not speak. It was his move; the thing was not new to me. Here was a man who sought my door, yet on the threshold, hesitated. There was little repentance in his heart, I dare say, but a hungry look in his eyes as he appraised me. The next time, as he ambled down the street, I rose, opened the door, and resumed my seat upon the steps. Doc Fay's door was open, but no man was lured within.

On the next trip past he noted the change and paused directly before me. Then his air grew jaunty; he raised a thin, bony hand and shoved his hat back upon his head—haggard face, unshaven chin, and sunken, pasty cheeks. I didn't size him up then. When a man has lived like an animal for a while, he takes on the appearance of one. But his jaunty air was a poor counterfeit when he spoke. His voice was husky.

I GUESS I'll be getting some charity here." He smacked his dry lips when he spoke.

I looked him straight between the eyes before I answered.

"You'll find no charity here," I told him.

"This, Doc Fay's—the Bible-Stiff?" He hesitated. "And—and you'll be him?"

"Yes—right, both times."

"I was told—your door is open to crooks." And then, with some bitterness, "Charity."

"My door is open to men who are victims of environment." I watched him closely. And although his hat went further back as he scratched his head, I could see that he understood me. Here was an educated man who had fallen—another look at him—fallen hard.

"It's mixed up to me." The words came through the side of his mouth, marking him for one who had served his time. "I want shelter—I want food—I want a job—and I'm broke."

[Turn to page 82]



Anson

A FEW years ago I fell in love with Marian Tyle. I said nothing about it to anyone for four years, then I told my father. We had always been close to each other, and though he had been absent for a number of years the tie did not seem lessened nor strained. I know that my own love for him, my respect for his fine and courageous character, my admiration for his stately English and old-world courtesy had only grown during the time he was away. That day when I walked into his office and faced him over his desk to tell him that I was in love with Marian Tyle, I wondered if the tie would be threatened. I had to risk it. I told him. For a moment he was silent, then he looked up at me, shook his head, frowned incredulously and said:

"I have no wish to pain or offend you, Anson. But every father visions his child's future largely—and I must say that never in my wildest flights of imagination, never in my most distorted of parental fears, have I held any picture—any thought—any—any—"

"Don't fumble, pater," I interrupted, realizing with a surge of relief that he had not turned from me, in spite of his Victorian ideals. Or rather, I should have said Puritanical. And remembering my training at his hands, rigid and high of standard as it had been, I went on: "You never thought I could be so utterly unoriginal, so crassly banal as to fall in love with another man's wife. Is that it?"

"Yes—just about." Father nodded, permitting me a smile of understanding. "You're certain this is no transient fever, which may pass? Perhaps it is only a

Suppose Your *You'll Ask Yourself:*

W h y

temporary infatuation? So many men have thought—"

"Quite certain." I told him, for I was. "I'm thirty-five years old. I've cut my eye-teeth. I know women, as well as a man can. I dare say Marian isn't a great deal different from the rest of her sex; intelligent, refined, controlled, well-groomed bodily and mentally, as we expect women of our social stratum to be. Perhaps the only way in which she differs from hundreds of others is in the fact that she is my ideal—and she belongs to another man."

"So many people have thought that," my father answered steadily. "Oftenest it is the mistaken urge of desire for the thing forbidden—once in a great while it is real. Very real, and then it is tragic."

"This is real!" I said grimly.

For a moment my father did not speak, but sat gazing past me at the wall. Then he knocked the ash from his cigar, meticulously avoiding my eyes, asking casually. "I suppose she is as certain of herself as you are of yourself?"

"I believe so," I answered. "She is three years younger than I—she's also cut her eye-teeth. She doesn't dissemble. She has stated her angle of the situation pretty clearly."

"Ah! *Her angle!*" My father raised his eyes to my face. "And—what about yours?"

"My angle?" I shook my head, hopelessly, I suspect. "Simply that to me all women are nothing after Marian. If I hadn't known so many women I couldn't be so sure of that. Her ways are my ways. Her thoughts, impulses, traditions and beliefs are wholly compatible with my own. She—she fits. You know how it is."

"Yes, yes. I know." Father sighed, rather heavily. "Also—I know that having found the one woman who does fit—we don't quite find another. A man may know many women afterward, may even marry. But that is with the physical body only. The one woman always holds the inner man, owns him some place within, set

It Were Wife!

*“Could This
Happen to Me?”*

N o t ?

apart, where no one ever sees. Yes, Anson—I believe this is one of the rare cases where it is real.” He paused, sighed again, then assumed a brisk air of having arrived at the obvious ultimate conclusion. “Well, this is the twentieth century. Tell Tyle, have it out peacefully, get a divorce. That’s *her* next move. Face the notoriety, marry her and live it down. That’s *yours*.”

I turned and looked out the window. I didn’t know how I was going to tell him, and for want of a better way I blurted it out, baldly.

“Can’t be done.” I wanted it to sound final, but I fear it only sounded curt. My throat was dry and my lips stuck together.

“Why?” Father’s eyes bored into my back. I felt them, and swung round to face him. It seemed an hour before I replied.

“She won’t get a divorce.”

“Why?” Father dropped the butt of his cigar into the ashtray on his desk, and leaned toward me, one hand on his knee.

SHE’S too decent,” I answered shortly.

“Decent? Oh, I say! I don’t follow you, my son!”

I didn’t blame him for his sarcasm; it would seem to have been justified. But I came back rather hotly.

“Your insinuation is unjust. We’ve both been pretty decent about it all along. I don’t know that I can make you see. It’s—Tyle. She loved him, perhaps, in a half-baked callow way when she married him a few years ago. And then, too, his wealth and family dazzled her.”

“Must have been a good many years ago,” Father interrupted, staring fixedly. “Child! Couldn’t know her own mind.” He lit another cigar and began puffing at it furiously. By that sign I knew he was deeply moved.

“Exactly,” I agreed. “And when she realized—it was too late. But she stuck it out. Other men didn’t make any difference to her till she ran into me. We can’t explain these things. What is it that makes one person in-



Lela

dispensable to another? I have to believe that love—whatever it is—comes only once. Oh, there may be other affections, quieter attachments, calm feverless friendships. But there’s only one love that reaches in and taps your very soul. Only one person whose presence can make you shake like a leaf. Only one voice that can set your pulses hammering. Only one being so much a part of life that, without that one, life becomes a drab desert punctuated by oasis of pain. Only one you’d go down on your knees and crawl through hell to—”

“Is it that bad?” Father interrupted, gently.

“That bad,” I answered. “But Marian happens to believe in law and order—and so do I. There’s—Tyle.”

“Well?” My father’s voice was impatient. “Can’t he take care of himself? He won’t want to be a dog in the manger, will he? I’m certain I shouldn’t want to hold any woman who loved another man.”

“He doesn’t know anything about it.” It was growing more difficult for me; every word was a burden. “Tyle’s a decent fellow, you know. Kind, generous, considerate of her and everyone. Democratic and aristocratic at the same time. The kind of man women go wild over, but he never even thinks of any woman but Marian. Crazy about her. Yet—she just doesn’t love him. That’s all. You can’t rule those things.”

“Well—” Father smiled at me, dryly. “It’s a good thing I came home. I didn’t intend to stay overseas so long. You never mentioned these Tyles in any of your letters. Is that why? I see. How long have they been in town? Four years? Hm! Funny. I just had a



*The picture that
stays in my mind
is the Marian I
saw dreaming
one day—when
she was helping
to bring Dad
through*



sudden feeling I ought to come home, and after putting it off from month to month for over a year I up and took the next steamer to America. Now, my son, we'll just see what can be done about this."

"Nothing," I cut in. "Didn't you know? Hadn't I told you? Tyle is blind."

"Blind?" My father settled back in his chair, and eyed me with a kind of blank astonishment. "Blind! That *does* rather change the aspect of things. How long has he been so?"

"Ten years." I sat down. My body was weary, more weary than my mind. "Hunting. Gun backfired and blew his eyes full of powder. It's different from congenital blindness. A man who's never known the world of sight makes his own world, grows up in it, accustomed to it, gravitates naturally to blind others and accrues a set of friends. He's more independent, if you get what I mean. But when a man's been normal all his life, to suddenly have the light wiped out like that—it leaves him helpless. Ever since the accident Arthur's leaned on Marian, like a child alone in the dark. Must be a terrific thing—sudden blindness." I tried to visualize it to myself, as I'd done a hundred times before, over and over.

"Is it irreparable?"

"I fear so," I nodded. I was tired—tired out. "The eyeballs were pretty badly injured. They've tried every specialist in the U. S. He has no people living. Without Marian he'd be utterly alone. And you've got to remember the man loves her, as much as I do, no doubt. He'd go mad if anything took Marian from him. No—there's only one thing for me to do. I must go away, and go quickly."

"Anson!" Father's voice was astoundingly alarmed, appealing.

"Oh, I don't mean to stay," I said quickly. "I'm doubly glad you came home. It gave me a chance to talk and get this out of my system, and it gives me a chance to get a change of scenery for a while. I want to go away—off somewhere by myself, miles from everything I've ever known, and think it out. Then I'll come back. I just want to get away—from all this." I waved my hand at the smoking stacks of the factory, showing through the windows. "I've already told Marian. She thinks it's very wise. I'll drop in tomorrow and tell Lela good-by. Then I'm off."

"Poor old Lela Rhodes. She'll miss you. I gather from your frequent mention of her in your letters that you've been as chummy with her as ever? Yes?" Father paused, shook his head and added softly, "I—I wish your mother were living."

"So do I." How many times I had wished that. "But I haven't forgotten her precepts. I've reasoned this thing out pretty coolly for myself. I'm thinking of the other fellow. I've tried to put myself in Tyle's place. Suppose Marian were my wife—eh?"

"Go on." My father's eyes bored into me. I was puzzled by their expression, but I went on as he bade me, not trying to get my meaning into any coherent phrases, just thinking aloud.

"Oh—I don't know. It's hard to express. In this

generation we're a lot of selfish dubs. Self-centered is the better word, maybe. Most men and women, placed in a situation parallel to the one in which Marian and I find ourselves, would consider their own particular angles, only. But there's the third angle—the husband's. I can't wreck another man's home. I—well, I guess you taught me too well. If you're right inside it simply isn't done. That's all. A man can't rule his heart, but—by George!—he can force his head and his decency to rule his acts. That's what I'm trying to do."

"I see." My father reached across the desk and laid his hand over mine. The thing in his eyes was reward for all the fight had cost me. "It's a tough problem. I must say I think you have faced it—adequately. Anything I can do—"

"Thanks—I fear there isn't anything," I answered. He'd done the one thing already, anyhow—simply understood.

Three days later I was speeding west on the Sundown Limited. And as I paced stumblingly across the narrow platform of the observation car, one thing my father had said to me rose high in my mind. As he had paused inside the station gates for a brief farewell, he had laid his hand on my arm, looking keenly into my eyes.

"Anson, your mother once gave me an axiom that was darned good medicine. I've tried it. She said when one found oneself facing heartache or heartbreak the best palliative was to seek and serve someone whose heart was still more badly damaged. You might try it."

At the time I had received it rather lightly, giving it no particular thought, not wondering at the probability of a hidden meaning in his words, nor at the fact of his saying that as a parting shot. But now as I stood on the swaying platform, staring into the windwake of the train, I began to ponder on what the dickens he

might have meant. I recalled other remarks, other slight incidents. For one thing, the odd way in which he had looked at me when I spoke of dropping in to take leave of Lela Rhodes. "Poor old Lela Rhodes—" he had said. "A more badly damaged heart—" In spite of myself the two phrases would connect themselves. It set me thinking. Father never spoke idly.

I had known Lela Rhodes for twenty years. We'd been through grade school and high school together. I couldn't vision the past without Lela Rhodes. But she had never been more than a pal, a chum. At least, to me that was the beginning and end of our relationship. She was a sworn follower of athletics, golf, swimming, tennis *et al.* After Marian and Arthur Tyle had come to town I had seen less of Lela, but our long-time friendship still endured. But why had Father said "poor old Lela Rhodes?"

I tramped the platform, chewing at my smouldering cigar, thinking back with painful accuracy. I don't think I was—or am—in any sense an egotist. It wasn't in my capacity to arrogate to myself adulation or esteem, or the unmerited imagination of any woman's affection. But neither was I quite a fool. And as I thought and sifted,

little things began to stand out in a revealing light. I recalled numerous veiled remarks, looks and allusions from and among members of the old set. I knew that some of them had thought Lela cared for me, but I had considered it rather ridiculous. I had been certain Lela was entirely wrapped up in her sports. But those two keenly aimed remarks of my father's knocked my placid indifference into a cocked hat. I had been blinded by the light of Marian Tyle—I was not capable of even expressing an opinion. Was it possible that Lela *had* cared for me all along, and everyone but me had seen it? I cursed myself hotly, hurled my cigar butt at the shining rails sliding away to the rear, and stamped into the car, determined to find out.

I wrote to Lela, a *j u m b l e d*, fragmentary letter, sitting on the edge of my berth, and mailed it at the next stop. Her answer reached me in Los Angeles two days after I arrived there. It was a bit constrained, somewhat bewildered, but pleased; and there was something between the lines that any man would have recognized instantly,

unless he were that most asinine of all egotists who smirkingly declares he can not see how anyone could ever care for him. Somebody always cares for everybody.

I THOUGHT the whole matter over carefully, stretched on the hot sand at Santa Monica, watching the pelicans and seagulls fight for the fish thrown on the pier by generous anglers. As my father had come to see, this thing between Marian and me was real. There could never be anyone for me but Marian. But, also as Father had said, that was in an inner place, set apart, where no one could ever see. I knew our love had been a thing of undercurrents so well hidden that not even one of the most discerning of our friends had ever suspected it. But, deep and real as it was, Marian was barred from me by my own code of fair-dealing. And if Lela wanted me, if I could give her anything, why should I hesitate to contribute that much to society at large? So I made my decision.

Lela and I carried on a rapid fire correspondence for three months, until I was very certain I saw in her letters the thing I must see before I would commit myself. Then I framed a letter to her, taking care to say only what I could say with sincerity. Lela herself was a sincere person. I told her I cared more for her than I could ever care for any other woman—which was no lie. I did care for her comradeship, her splendid qualities, her fine spirit. Marian was ruled out by the past—and that was not for Lela to know. And—I asked Lela to marry me.

Her answer, sent by special delivery, touched me profoundly. It said in no uncertain terms that she had loved me all her life—there could never be any other man for her. She had thought for a long time she was going to lose me, that I would never care for any woman. But now she was the happiest woman in the world, and if I did not come right home she would come after me. I went.

FATHER asked no questions. He was delighted. None of the old set were surprised; they had expected it for years. Lela and I were married and went on a honeymoon trip. During that honeymoon I set myself determinedly against the past and gave my whole thought and time to the business of making Lela content with the step she had taken. If at times the image of Marian Tyle rose persistently before me, causing me to doubt—with a strange sinking at the heart—the wisdom of my course, I had only to glance into my wife's glowing eyes to be set right with myself again. The surest antidote for despair is the sincere pursuit of any altruistic motive.

When we returned home and I had again slipped into the harness of hard work, I deliberately sought the society of the Tyles, to prove to myself that my code of honor should never be violated, even in the closest proximity to what—for most men—might have meant too powerful temptation. Only once did the past ever rise between Marian Tyle and me. It was at the opera when I, leaning forward, intent on the exquisite aria being sung by a famous tenor, chanced to look squarely into Marian's eyes. Our gaze held for an [Turn to page 86]



Was it gratitude? Or could it have been the same feeling I had for Marian?

The Spotlight



MARILYN MILLER has come back to Broadway in a new musical comedy, "Sunny." She is a popular idol and has never appeared to better advantage than she does as the little circus girl.



HELEN FORD has achieved another delightful success in "Dearest Enemy," a musical comedy which relates a remarkable love story of the Revolutionary period.



ALICE BOULDEN heads some of the best musical numbers in "Gay Paree," advertised as a "continental revue." Her voice and dancing are both used to advantage in this popular show.





LUCILLE OSBORNE has attracted a good deal of attention in "Captain Jinks," another of this season's crop of musical hits. She is one of the outstanding favorites of this comedy.

XUM



Body and Soul

*Which Has to Do
With a Pathway
Up the Mountain
—and Also With
Rhoda's Way of
Living*



All the things I never had the chance to say came out at one time.

A FELLOW born with that call of the mountains in the blood like I was, can't be happy unless he's where the hills roll high, and shadows keep creeping up the mountains, like salamanders crawling up on their bellies.

Lonesome? Well, the mountains are a bit lonesome, but so is the city, and the sea, and the prairies, and the great desert I hear tell of. To some folks, and I am one of them, the world is always lonesome, though sometimes, for a brief spell, it hands out a bit of color to put in the patch-quilt we call Life.

My mother never had to really worry about my getting caught by the lure of the city. But she did, on account of my father being a bad one, yes—from New York—and leaving her when I was no more than a babe in arms, you might say, and never having come back. He did send her a mite every month till I was thirteen.

I never had the city in my heart. 'Twas the rain beating sideways into the gray river, and the sun slanting on the high peaks, and the rabbits and deer starting through the red and gold woods in the autumn. These were in my blood, and no wild horses could have got me to New York, or any other city.

Especially after my father was killed in New York, shot by the man who was defending the reputation of a

lady, my father having made damaging remarks about her. A bad end to a no-account life, though the papers made much of it. You see, he was well born, and the lady, too.

I was talking of color a while back. Ever notice how every day the mountains wear a different color? Sometimes green, sometimes blue, and then again purple, stretching off in the distance to pinkish gray? And they have tantrums like us. Sometimes being proud and haughty, raising their leafy shirts disdainfully from the valley. Sometimes they're stormy and in a temper, or friendly and close like good neighbors.

Friendly and close they were that spring day I first met Rhoda Davidson, up there ahead of me on the trail, with her skirts drawn up to her knees, while she danced from rock to rock, and her long hair, blue-black like the sun on a swallow's wing, trailing after her. 'Twas three years after my father's disgraceful death, and I was twenty-one. Only the back of her could I see, and I stood still, watching that slim childish figure pointing dainty feet on the same stones where my big heavy boots would have to step.

"One of these dryads they write of in the sixth reader," thought I. "She don't belong to this life."

Then she heard me coming, and down dropped the

skirts, quick-like, as if she was caught in some mischief.

"Good-morning, ma'am," said I, being what any one of us would say to a stranger.

She turned sort of sharp, and her dark hair twisted 'round her throat like a scarf. Never have I seen such eyes. Dark-blue, like the damson plums hanging on the trees in September, and mysterious, too—the way all things in nature are mysterious.

"Don't be afraid, ma'am," I went on, seeing the fright in her beautiful, white face.

She half shut her eyes and said, "You just startled me, that's all. You *are* Paul Andrus, are you not?"

A body could tell in a minute she was from the city, providing she really wasn't some creature stepped right out of a tree trunk, and realizing this, I felt big and clumsy before such daintiness.

"Yes, ma'am," I answered, something trembling queer inside me, like often I did at sight of a rainbow-trout leaping from the water, but never at sight of a girl.

"Somebody pointed you out to me," she explained.

"Mr. Andrus, I have a favor to ask of you. You'll take me to meet your mother, won't you?"

I was that surprised I scarce knew what to say. "Are you looking for room and board, ma'am?"

NO, I just want to meet your mother. Promise me you'll take me. Please. Tomorrow. If I come to the saw-mill just when the whistle blows, you'll take me home with you, won't you?"

'Twas all puzzling—how she knew my name and where I worked, and why she wanted to meet Ma, but with stammering and stuttering I managed to say, "Ma'll be right pleased to know you."

"I hope so," she whispered, so low a body couldn't tell if she really spoke.

I was bound for the top of Mt. Samter, where Uncle Eph was warden of the fire observatory. Once every week I took the trail, so as he could come down for victuals, and a visit with Ma, who was his sister. Uncle Eph hadn't married, but lived up there on the mountain,



"Is there something I can do for you?" she asked after a spell. "I'm a busy woman, with ten boarders to look after."

guarding the forest from fire and making friends of the bears and porcupines, like other folks make friends of babies and dogs.

Rhoda Davidson walked up to the top with me, protesting she was strong, though she looked frail and delicate. At first she kept on chattering in that dainty, city way, but climbing up is hard work, and after a while she grew quiet, just turning now and then to smile at me.

Having left school in the sixth reader, to help Ma do for the boarders, I lack the fine language to describe her smile. When the sun breaks through a clouded sky, making a great crooked tear through which comes slanting bands of light and shadow—that was her smile. Light and shadow. I noticed right off there was shadow on her lips and in her witch eyes, and wondering thoughts about it filled my head.

The trail up Mt. Samter is like a tunnel of trees, cool and restful, and in the dimness she slipped away from me, out of sight. I found her leaning against a pine tree, her hair mingling with the needles like 'twas made of the



same fabric. Not knowing who she was, or where she was stopping, I'd not have been surprised had those branches bent right down and gathered her up in their arms.

"You mustn't get off the trail that way," I said to her, gruff-like.

"I will if I want to," she laughed.

Then something strange came into her face. Maybe it's not right to use the word, but it was a bold look—almost like she was daring me to come over and kiss her, and put my arm around her waist. But before I knew what to do, it was gone, and she seemed weak and pale, and her eyes was shut.

YOU'RE right, Paul," she said. "Only I've been off the trail so often. I seem to find my way easier off than on. But somebody always calls me back when I get off, the way you did."

She'd had some powerful trouble, that a man could understand, and I figured maybe it wasn't good for her to speak of it. So we started off again, and when we got near the top she broke the silence.

"Up here it seems easy to do just what one ought to do. It's that way at St. Theresa's, too."

"Are you stopping at the Sisters'?"

Deep in the woods, about a mile out of town, there was a religious retreat, where women came for rest and meditation. It never occurred to me that she might come from there. She was doing up her hair now, turning it into a knot at the back of her neck, and she nodded her answer, on account of having hairpins between her little red lips.

"I'm not of their faith, but they took me in," she told me. "I'm not of any faith. I guess—I'm not good enough for faith."

"Don't say that, ma'am."

She shook her head sadly. "Paul, there's a lot you can't know, living here where everything is clean and unspoiled. That's why I love St. Theresa's, with its silent halls and sweet-faced Sisters. Far from the wickedness of the world. Sometimes they take me far from my own wickedness, too."

"There can't be any wickedness in you," I interrupted, surprising myself with my own boldness.

"Oh, isn't there," she said bitter-like, putting her hand on my arm, and it wasn't any heavier than a leaf brushing against my sleeve. "Listen to me, Paul. I want to be friends with you. But don't you ever try to find the wickedness in me. You'll be shocked if you do, and hurt."

I CALLED to mind that daring look in her eyes, and said nothing, only to remind her that there were others better fitted to be her friends, like the schoolmaster, and the dominie. She got real angry, her eyes flashing fire, and her lips setting to a straight, scarlet line.

"Don't you want to be friends with me, Paul? Just say so, and I'll turn around and go back."

There's no accounting for my answer, except this way—that I was a silent lad and had never talked so long nor so intimate with a girl, and all the things I never had the chance to say came out at one time, like the thrush which sings to his mate but one day in the year, saving all his sweetest notes for that one song.

"Don't do that," I cried out. "There's nobody in the world I'd rather be friends with."

Then what do you think she did? She was standing on a big rock a little ways above me, so that for all her tininess her head was high as mine. She threw her arms

around my neck and kissed me, square on the lips. Then in a flash, she was dancing along again and laughing to her heart's content, with witchcraft in her dark, dark eyes but faint shadow on her lips.

Maybe in the city 'twas custom for men and women to kiss so free, but in the mountains a girl didn't kiss a man until things were fixed between them, unless she wasn't any better than she should be. But to think such evil of Rhoda Davidson was like thinking evil of a wild rose. So in spite of being upset, I pretended such things were common in my life.

That night it all came back to me, the magic and mystery of her coming out of the woods with that strange request, and the pitiful way that sadness seemed to ripple through her joyous body. That's what Rhoda Davidson was, a body and soul that didn't match. Like I worked it out later, her warm, throbbing little body kept rushing out for adventures in Life, while her soul longed only for peace and love.

I mistrusted my own memory, but on the next evening, as I was leaving the saw-mill, sure enough I caught sight of her standing by the gate. She was in black, and looking like a lorn child. And again that queer trembling took hold of me.

"You'll take me, Paul?" she begged.

"I promised you, ma'am, I said.

She sighed, relieved. We didn't talk on the way, and I can't say what she was thinking of, but I know I was remembering her kiss, and how her lips felt soft and damp and red, like the touch of a ripe raspberry. Did she remember it, too, or was it just something she did without laying any importance to it?

I never saw my mother so cold and formal, like she was to Rhoda Davidson. The girl didn't seem to mind. Maybe she thought that was Ma's regular way, for she kept chatting real friendly, though Ma had suspicion written all over her face.

"Is there something I can do for you?" she asked after a spell.

The girl looked at me sort of appealing, her dark mystery eyes piercing straight to my heart. "You can let me—come to see you—often," she said kind of jerky, to Ma.

"I'm a busy woman. With ten boarders to do for, and not much time for strangers."

"Then I'll come and help you, Mrs. Andrus," said Rhoda. She was twisting her small white fingers like a person in pain.

Later, while walking back to the Retreat with Rhoda, I tried to apologize for Ma. She wouldn't let me say anything, though.

"Don't you think I can see that she's the sweetest woman in the whole world?"

"She is, but she didn't show you that side of her."

"I came without any introduction."

"You're my friend, and that ought to be enough. But here's the trouble. It's because you're from the city, and the city never brought her happiness."

Then before I knew what I was doing myself, I was telling her all about Ma, and her brave fight to keep going after she was deserted.

"And you never found out the name of the woman?" she asked.

"The papers kept it in the dark. And what's more, I don't want to know. Guess she's not what she ought to be, allowing men to kill for her honor. 'Twould only hurt Ma to know, and wouldn't do anybody any good."

Maybe it was only a foolish notion of duty toward Ma, but that was the way I felt—that the folks connected with the affair were unclean, something to be turned from, even if my father was no-account himself.

Soon enough we reached the Retreat. There was a dim light over the gate, and a bell-rope hanging beside the stone tower, so as folks could ring when they wanted to come in. Now Rhoda had to stretch a bit to reach the rope, and as she lifted her arms, arching her body back and raising herself to the tips of her dainty toes, that queer thing happened again. It wasn't in her eyes this time. Leastways, I couldn't see her eyes, but the light played dim around her body, making it stand out from the darkness like a spirit leading a man to adventure. All the pretty curves in her body seemed to be calling "Come!"

Somehow, I can't explain it. Her frail white fingers reaching through the air just beckoned a man on, the way her eyes did the day before.

Nobody could have been any more surprised—that a silent, sober lad like I was, should have let himself go after knowing a girl for only two days. But I wasn't thinking of that then. Seemed to me I knew her all my life, like I knew the trails and flowers and stars. Seemed to me she might slip back into one of the trees whence she came if I didn't hold her tighter.

A drowsy spring sky was hangin' between the mountain peaks, making a starry canopy over our heads. Rhoda lay quiet in my arms, clinging to me and sobbing soft-like, till my heart fairly broke with pain. 'Twas when I kissed her that she began to struggle, and beg. "Paul, put me down."

Seeing her standing before me again, with her head tilted back and her hand to her throat, her loveliness set my blood beating, but I held on this [Turn to page 107]

\$5,000 for Your Stories

*We Are Looking for
the Little Dramas of
Everyday Life*



How many stories does this picture suggest to you?

How many misunderstandings and heartbreaks have taken place just this way?

How often have YOU been one of the parties to just such a scene?

OF COURSE I'm always talking about how our readers are our writers—but have you ever stopped to think just what that means?

It means that every month we pay five thousand dollars for stories, and pictures, many of them by people who never wrote before.

That is mere routine work, but I want to call it to your attention as powerfully as I can.

Would you write a story for a thousand dollars? Of course you would! So I'm going to give SOMEBODY a thousand dollars for a story. And I'm going to give four other people two hundred and fifty dollars each for their stories. And I'm going to buy as many of the others which are submitted as I find suitable for publication.

We're not looking for stories by professional writers. Big names don't mean a thing to SMART SET, because we don't use names on our stories anyway. We want the story.

What we want are the little dramas of everyday life. We want you to clear the cobwebs out of your head and see what you can do with that story which has been stored away for so long.

I don't believe you realize how interesting it is to write a story. Get the family together and work it up as if you were playing a game. Everyone may be able to add a bit to it, and you will be surprised how fast the time flies once it starts to grow.

IT WILL carry you back to things you have forgotten. It will bring memories of winter days when you went coasting—or voices which have long been silent.

That is the very spirit of SMART SET. We all want to stay young together. We want to recall the thrills which lie behind us.

Read this issue carefully. It will help you. Notice the variety of subjects and the simplicity of style in our stories. And then talk over the subject with your family and friends. Make a game of it.

The requirements are very simple.

We want stories of life written in the first person style. The length should be not less than three thousand nor more than six thousand words.

Manuscripts should be typewritten, double spaced. Use only one side of the paper. If typewriter is not available, use ink and be careful to write so that the story is easy to read. Address them in care of the Contest Editor.

The Contest will close February 15, 1926. Prize winners will be announced in the June, 1926, issue, when the first prize story will be published.

The editors will be the judges.

We want everyone who is interested in SMART SET to write a story, feeling confident that we are not seeking professional writers.

This is the first of a series of surprises we have in store for the coming year. Every month you will find something new to stimulate your interest in SMART SET. It's a game of a sort. I'm always trying to find something you haven't thought of so that you can try your hand at a new idea! Have you read page 72?—THE EDITOR.

The Mother Who Went to Heaven

SOONER or later in Life everyone hears an invisible voice—a sort of whispered warning. It was that way when I first called upon Carlton T. Sandford. He was the mysterious stranger who came to our little Georgia town one fall day and bought the old Yulee House with all its traditions of the South's Great Period, moving in the same afternoon.

An unaccountable premonition possessed me that Sunday afternoon as we sat with him on his newly acquired veranda, making conversation while our glances danced down into the golden heart of an autumn valley. I say our glances; I must not include the eyes of Carlton T. Sandford. Perhaps they strayed once or twice down into the vale of the Blue Ridge foothills. However, for the most part, his staring eyes were upon the soft beauty of my wife's oval face; the sun glory of her hair; the tender curves of her graceful throat.

Somehow I sensed then that the tall, smooth-voiced man who had dropped into our placid existence from out of nowhere was destined to figure in the future of Helen, little Billy, and myself.

When we left Yulee House, Sandford's shadow stalked me—a phantom playing hide and seek in dusk that was like the goldenrod. From then on I seemed to see his hard, handsome face everywhere. He glided into our dining-room, followed us upstairs later, and remained in the velvet dark.

The next day his shadow trailed me to my grocery store. He passed in and out with my friendly customers. That night he seemed to sit with us in our screened porch. His glances did not wander out into the half-light



"No, Billy," I whispered hoarsely. "We don't want her to go back to Heaven."

of starry night. Instead, they appeared to be fastened on my wife.

Our north Georgia country turned from wine-red color to that of yellow flame, and then to sere brown. Soon the nights became crisply cool. Helen and I sat inside with our papers and books, often looking through the windows at a round harvest moon climbing high above a vague horizon of purple.

Sitting there, deeply conscious of my wife's appeal, I sometimes used to think Sandford's eyes were peering down at her from the moon; used to suspect from the faraway look in her blue eyes that she saw them too—or, that a spell was upon her. Twice, with such thoughts in my heart, little Billy had awakened upstairs and called



*From Out of
Nowhere
Came Voices
of What Was
to Happen—
in This Story
of a Man
and a
Little Boy—
and a
Woman
Who
Forgot*

her. Both times she had acted as if suddenly shaken out of a dream. And, I had had to run up to him myself. But, child-like, he always cried for his mother. . . .

Winter came with a rush of wind from out of the northern mountains. Folks stayed indoors more. Trade slackened up as always. I shut up shop every evening. Home was the best place to be—home where a slim woman and a chubby boy waited in the snug comfort of flames blazing and crackling in an open fireplace. But, it was always the same about Sandford. His vision would flare up out of the leaping flames, and I found it hard indeed to forget that his interest in my wife had increased with each passing week; and that Helen seemed strangely happy in his attentions.

However, a man is much like a woman when it comes to thinking about those he loves and cherishes. He never believes the worst; he hopes against all the world. So, I

refused to entertain an idea that what I sensed was already possessing the village. No love affair was going on before my very eyes, I thought.

Helen was the ideal of my youth and manhood. I had loved her ever since I could remember. Only once had we been separated—my two years in France with the infantry. She was still my dream wife—the mother of my boy. Helen's heart had not changed!

Christmas smashed this belief.

YULEE HOUSE was made the scene of an entertainment for the town children. There was a great tree; presents; candy in red and green net bags; and a good-natured Santa Claus. Helen had worked hard to make the affair a success. I found myself somewhat astounded at the easy fashion she played hostess in another man's house. She—well, she almost seemed the great place's mistress. She was here and there, all over the place, her eyes sparkling with dazzling lights; her cheeks as red as Christmas berries.

Sandford, having played Santa Claus, went upstairs to change his costume. I noticed that Helen followed. Two forces battled inside of me. One was the fear that if I rushed after them, I might discover evidence I did not want to find. The other was the ages-old instinct of

the male to prevent another man from stealing away the woman of his heart.

I found her in his arms, her lovely lips upturned to him. I heard him say he loved her—that she was the woman of his Destiny. When her arms tautened around his wide shoulders and she raised up on tip-toes I could hardly keep from rushing in and tearing Sandford apart; but there would have been a nasty scene. I had to think of Helen and little Billy. I turned away and went downstairs to find our boy. Time and time again, I looked into his eyes and face that were so much his mother's and tried to make-believe I had not seen anything upstairs, but the heart believes what the eyes see. And, I had seen my boy's mother—my Helen—in Carlton T. Sandford's arms!

THAT night I drifted through the gates of despair. I looked upon Life as something that had been cruelly smashed into ugly fragments. I pictured myself forever tortured by the memory of a woman whom I must lie about to Billy all his life—because I would always want him to love her. I saw him growing up somehow without her tenderness; without her beauty to make him believe in the fineness of Life; without her inspiration for the dreams that would some day come to him. And I wondered before my God how such a thing could ever come to pass.

"How can she who is sleeping so near me be other than what she has always been—my own?" I begged in the secret anguish of my heart. The answer stabbed me with a recurrent vision of what I had witnessed in Yulee House that night.

Yet, for all my persistent belief that Helen had broken faith, the next day brought hope. I sat across the breakfast table and watched her help our boy with his food. Surely, I told myself, no mother could sin in her heart of hearts against the father of such a blue-eyed son. As if to confirm my inward reflection, she looked up from his busy little fingers, smiling as women smile upon the fathers of their children.

I forced myself to believe Helen the victim of an infatuation, in spite of Sandford's shadow that continued ever at my heels. The truest of women are sometimes lured and fooled by fascination. That she was only wavering for the moment, was my plea in her favor—the plea that kept me from following the code of my country. Down there in the shadows of the Blue Ridge, courts were rarely appealed to in cases where a man came into another's home and went out a transgressor. A husband was the law—unwritten as it may have been. He simply met the invader, and exacted the only settlement that can ever satisfy the wrong. Sometimes it was exacted by a pistol—sometimes by a shotgun. In either case the result was the same.

IMIGHT have killed Sandford easily enough—and never spent a night in jail. I was a native of the county; Sandford was a stranger with Yankee ways, although he claimed birth in Virginia. He had invaded my home. I would have been secretly applauded if I had appealed to the unwritten law.

But, strange to say, I didn't want to kill him. I hardly

Somehow I sensed then that he was destined to figure in the future of Helen.



understood this attitude then. Now I know what kept me from going after Sandford that way. If I had killed him I would have admitted what I didn't want to admit—that he was really her lover!

So, I kept on pleading with myself, saying that she was only infatuated; that soon her heart would come back home where it belonged. You see I loved her. She was my boy's mother.

March blustered into spring. One balmy day Sandford left town. Three days later the unforgivable thing happened. I came home from the store one noon to find Helen's note. She had followed Sandford because she loved him. There was no word of regret . . . no plea for forgiveness . . . no mention of little Billy and his future.

I read the note over and over, trying to find something in it that hinted she would not go through with the whole



thing; trying to read into it a word that showed she had not already placed a barrier between herself and her home. But the crisp sentences only grew more

damnably final with each new reading. I walked out of our little house, crushing the fatal piece of paper in my big hand, suffering a torment of body and soul that comes only when the finest thing in Life is shattered—a man's faith in the wife of his dreams.

Down in the shadows of greening trees I lived over every moment of my existence, going back to earliest memories when Life had spread itself before me like a thing of golden enchantment, promising all that it ever promises to Youth. I re-lived my days with Helen, remembering how her girlish beauty had charmed me; how quickly and surely we had been drawn to each other!

How I tried to recall all the happiness that had been suddenly snatched from those memories! How I tried to shut my eyes to the sunlight streaming through the trees, and make-believe a fact was only a nightmare! But, the crumpled piece of pulp in my hand was like a burning

coal that ate into the very core of my consciousness, inflaming me with the ugly knowledge that Helen had really gone away and left us because she had given her love to another man. Then I wished I had killed him.

Somehow I made plans, my mind goaded out of its numbness by the thought that I could not spend even one night under the roof of the home she had deserted. I would take Billy away with me. We would go to some strange little place, perhaps up in Tennessee where there would be no knowing, pitying eyes to follow us around. Judge Stevens could put my store and house up for sale. Some day, when more money was needed for my boy, I would go in business.

WHAT will I tell him? How can I ever explain his mother's absence?" I tortured myself thus on the way back home. Of course, even if the truth were comprehensible to him, I would not tell Billy. He must grow up with an unchanged memory of the soft-voiced woman who had once seemed wrapped up in his budding life.

He was there in the house with the colored girl, his blue eyes rolling around, wondering why we were so late for mid-day dinner. When he heard my steps in the hall he bounded out, stopping short and looking childishly baffled upon seeing me alone.

"Where's Mama?" he asked, shuffling his little hands in and out of a base-ball glove.

"She won't be home to dinner, Billy," I told him, fearful lest his boyish ears note the difference in my voice. "We're going to eat alone this noon. Just you and me. You can have her place at the table," I went on, believing conversation was the best way to turn his thoughts from Helen. But, Billy's mind was on his mother, as always.

"Where's she gone, and when's she coming back, Daddy?" he demanded.

"Oh—soon, Billy," I evaded, no longer sure of myself. "But where'd she go?"

"She went to—a lady's house," I said, catching one of his hands. He let me lead him into the dining-room and place him in his mother's chair. Once I looked across the table at his golden head bobbing over his plate, and wondered how I could ever go on seeing only little Billy in the place of the woman who had given him to me. And I wondered, too, how little Billy could get along with only his father to try and help him over the places in life that a mother is supposed to help.

IDON'T like eating dinner without Mama," he suddenly announced, pushing plate and glass away. My eyes seemed to focus aright for one moment. I noticed his dinner was untouched. He had only been playing in it with his fork. The same was true of my own food.

"But, you're—you're growing into a man, Billy. You—you've got to eat something, sonny. Aren't you playing base-ball again this afternoon?"

"Yes. Jimmy Smith's got a new bat. He promised to let me use it . . . But, Daddy, Mama'll be home to supper, won't she? She won't stay at the lady's then too, will she?"

"I'll get you a new bat like Jimmy's," I countered, hoping he would forget the supper question. There wasn't going to be any supper in our house. We were going away on the five o'clock train

He went with me to the store. [Turn to page 114]

Beyond



When Craig turned, his eyes were straight and clear, and I felt confident that he would play fair.

I WAS only an onlooker—yet, of the three, I think it was I who suffered most. They were too happy, too pitifully happy, just in being together. They would have time enough for suffering afterwards. I alone was unhappy, for I was forced to stand by, helpless, yet seeing so clearly what was happening.

But after all, nothing really *was* happening. That was the tragedy of it all—that nothing *could* happen. And they knew it from the first—they were so wise and strong, those two.

I don't know why the others didn't see. Probably they had grown used to the knowledge that Charis was unhappy, and that Craig was beautiful. For that is what he was, beautiful—strongly and cleanly beautiful in body and spirit. I had never seen him before and I never quite became accustomed to his young splendor. As for Charis' unhappiness, God knows I should have been used to that, but I had never reconciled myself to it. She had married me simply because she was unhappy at home; I

knew it at the time and hoped that I might bring her happiness, but I had failed. If I had known her better then I should never have dared to marry her. Charis is a creature of fire and air, and I am a stupid clod. I love her; I would give my life for her, yet always I know that I can never reach her spirit. I hold her in my arms; she yields proudly and graciously, for she is always gentle and courteous toward me, but she can no more be one with me than Andromeda could be one with the rock to which she was chained. I would willingly break her chains if that would make her happy; indeed shortly after our marriage, realizing my failure, I suggested a divorce.

"I can't bear to keep you against your will," I told her.

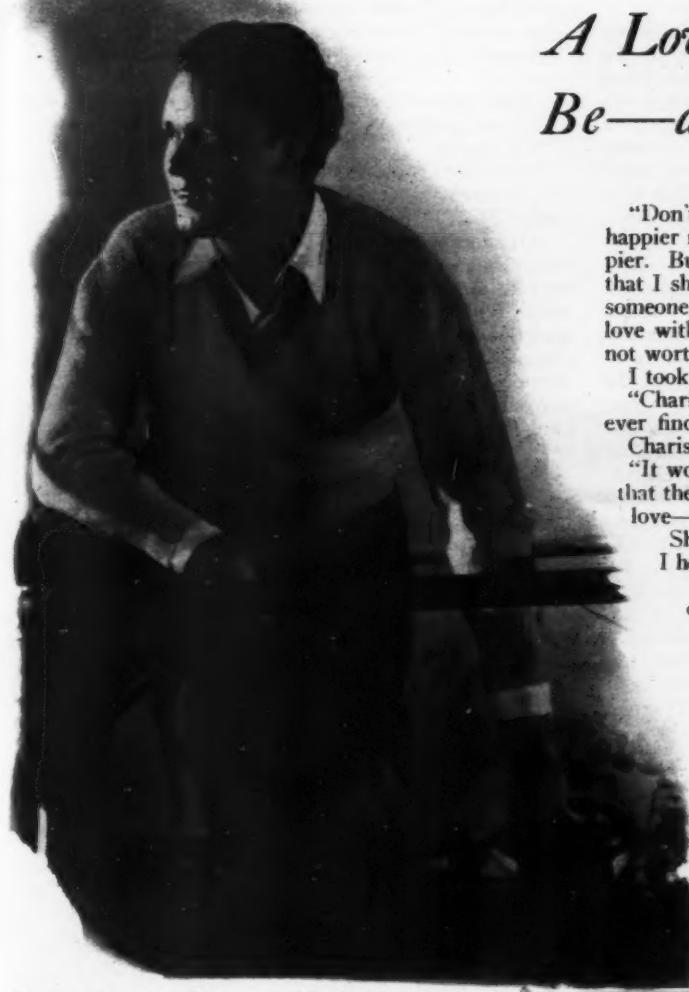
"But it isn't against my will, Ned," she answered, with that swift, dazzling smile of hers. "I don't want to be divorced."

"Please, Charis," I begged, "don't stay with me just because you are sorry for me. I couldn't bear that."

"You don't understand, my dear," she replied gently, as

the Breakers

A Love Which Could Not Be—and Yet Existed—



she stared across the lawn with that strange look which always makes me feel how far apart we are.

"I shouldn't have married you, Ned," she said at last. "But I was so stifled—so crushed—in Oaklands. Mother's relatives are all so dreadful, with their dullness and their prejudices. I am like my father. I simply couldn't stand it. I've always believed that Father died of dullness. He loved Mother, and he sacrificed himself to make her happy—she would have been wretched anywhere else. But I couldn't bear it; I had to get away; and I'd been so—so hampered all my life that I didn't have the courage to break away alone. That's why I married you—but it was wrong, Ned, to make you unhappy, too. I'm sorry dear."

"My darling," I told her, "I don't care why or how you married me. If I could only make you happy I should be the happiest man in the world, whether you loved me or not."

Charis put her arms around my neck and kissed me.

"Don't worry about me, Ned," she said softly. "I'm happier now than I was before I was married—lots happier. But I have a horrid disposition, dear. I don't think that I shall ever be really happy unless I am in love with someone, and I've never found a man that I could fall in love with. I'm just an unpleasant old crank, Ned; I'm not worth worrying about."

I took her hands.

"Charis," I said, "I want you to promise me that if you ever find anyone you can love—"

Charis laughed softly.

"It won't be 'anyone,'" she told me. "I have a feeling that there is only one person in the world whom I could love—and it's not likely that I shall ever meet him."

She kissed me again and tried to draw away, but I held her hands.

"Promise me, Charis," I begged, "that you'll divorce me when you find him."

Charis looked into my eyes and saw that I meant it.

"You dear old Ned," she whispered, and putting her arms around my neck, she laid her cheek against mine. "I promise," she said solemnly. Then she added, smiling, "If he wants to marry me, that is."

So we went on for nearly ten years. We were husband and wife, yet I knew that I had no part in Charis' life. It was not her fault, for she made no effort to keep me out, but I was utterly incapable of entering her heart. She lived among clouds and stars where I could never follow her. So we dwelt in different worlds, although our bodies lived under the same roof. Yet at least I had the satisfaction of knowing that other men were no nearer to her than I. For a long time I was wretched, hoping yet fearing that Charis would find the one man who could make her happy, but though she was gay and charming with all of them I could see that they were no more capable of touching her than was I. In spirit she was utterly aloof, seemingly with all. And sometimes, quite unexpectedly, the tears would come into her eyes. So I knew that her heart was lonely.

WE HAD been married ten years, and Charis was thirty, when Mrs. Forrester invited her to spend the summer with them at their cottage in Canada. Mrs. Forrester was her father's sister and the only relative of whom Charis was really fond, and though they hadn't seen each other for years they had written constantly. Mrs. Forrester knew of course that Charis' marriage hadn't been a shining success, but being a sensible person, she understood that we were making the best of it, and

wisely did the same. Besides, she had been happily married for many years—Craig was twenty—and she hadn't the faintest idea how to deal with an unhappy marriage.

Charis went North in July. I was invited to join them all at the end of August for a four or five days' cruise into Lake Superior. They had a little cruiser which Mr. Forrester and Craig handled by themselves, without a crew. Charis and I could have the forward cabin, Mrs. Forrester wrote, and Craig would keep his things in a locker and sleep on deck. He always slept on deck anyhow, and there would be plenty of room for us all.

I met them at the Soo one glorious blue morning when the air was tingling with life and the flowers in the station-yard were a splash of gold against the birches and water beyond. Charis was waiting on the platform, wearing a jersey blouse and tweed knickers and grey-blue sweater. She was lovelier than ever, but when our eyes met, my heart stood still. This was a new, a transfigured Charis. I said to myself, with sure knowledge, "She is in love," and even as she kissed me, I knew that for her I had ceased to exist.

WE CROSSED the road to the old lock where the *Nirvana* was waiting. Mr. and Mrs. Forrester had come ashore to meet us. Craig was doing something to the ropes at the stern and it was a moment before he turned. In that moment I had guessed the rest of the story that Charis' eyes had told me, but when Craig turned, his eyes were straight and clear, and I knew that I could trust him. Dazed by the realization of what had come to pass, I was unable to think clearly, yet I felt confident that he would play fair.

We were soon under way, Craig steering, perched on a high stool, and the rest of us sitting in wicker chairs, talking a little, but more often silent, enjoying the air and the changing waters and the smooth motion of the boat. The Forresters were that delightful sort of hosts who allow a guest to enjoy himself in his own way instead of trying to force him to enjoy himself in theirs. So I had time to collect my thoughts and try to adjust myself to the situation. One thing I saw clearly—Charis was happy at last and I would do nothing to mar her happiness. I tried desperately to still the pain in my own heart. After all, I argued with myself, I had never really possessed her; it was only the shell of her that I must give up, and surely the happiness of seeing her happy would more than repay me for that sacrifice. Yet, as I looked from Charis to Craig and back again to Charis a fierce physical jealousy seized me. I fought it down. There had been so little that I could give her all these years; when she demanded this greatest gift, I would not falter.

BUT I wondered how soon they were going to tell me. My present condition was intolerable.

After a while Craig turned to Charis.

"Want to steer?"

She smiled quickly, and without speaking went over to him. Craig lifted her onto the stool and remained standing beside her. For all my heartache I could not help smiling as I watched them. They loved each other so completely—belonged so completely to each other. Charis had been right when she had told me that there was only one man in the world whom she could love. I thanked God with all my heart that this man was worthy of her.

And the Forresters watched them contentedly, pleased that these two cousins should have found each other so congenial.

At last Charis said, "I'm going to get dinner today, Aunt Marian. Lift me down, Craig," and they beamed into each other's eyes as he obeyed. Then Craig climbed onto the stool again and Charis disappeared into the galley. I followed her, feeling that we must talk it all

over as soon as possible. As I entered she glanced up from a can of condensed milk, her eyes still alight with Craig's smile.

"Charis," I said, struggling to control my voice. "I haven't forgotten our agreement."

Charis looked at me as if she were seeing me for the first time.

"Our agreement?"

"That you should get a divorce when—whenever you wanted to."

"A divorce?" she repeated, as if she were wondering what on earth I was talking about.

"Good God, Charis!" I cried. "Do you think I can't see—"

"You mean—Craig?" The sound of his name brought a smile to her lips.

"Of course."

"Oh—but I couldn't marry Craig."

I stared. "Couldn't marry Craig?"

"Of course not, Ned." There was a note in her voice which I had heard too often before—a note which told me how far I was from understanding her. Under other circumstances I should have dropped the subject, but this subject was one which I could not drop.

"But why not,

For a moment Charis stood there—a thing of living marble, her glowing eyes caressing him.



Charis?" I persisted. "It seems to me that he is—"

"It would be hideous, Ned—hideous. The absurdity of it in the first place—a divorced woman of thirty and a boy of twenty. And first cousins besides. Then the differences in our lives—in our experiences. No, Ned—our love is perfect; our marriage, if we were to marry, would have to be perfect, too. We couldn't desecrate our love by an unworthy marriage. And a marriage between Craig and me would be unworthy of our love. Don't you see?"

I thought I did see, but I hated what I thought I saw.

DO YOU think," I asked her, "that—that this way of doing would be any more—worthy?"

"This way of doing?" Charis repeated. "Oh—you mean—"

"Yes."

She made a little scornful gesture.

"No—no, Ned. That would be worse. It would have to be everything or nothing with us—not just—nibbling."

"Then what *are* you going to do?"

"Nothing. I'm going home in a few days, and it'll probably be years before we see each other again. Craig was just a child the last time I saw him. He'll probably marry someone or other."

"Why shouldn't he? I'm married. Of course we'll see each other sometimes. We'll be very happy then—and a little happy always, just loving each other."

"And what does Craig say about all this?"

"He doesn't say anything. We've never talked about it."

"Never talked about it!" I exclaimed.

Her cool, smiling eyes looked into mine. "Why should we?"

I could find no answer. Why [Turn to page 112]





Daddy never did things like that, but I was so glad Mother was having a good time. Besides, she said that things were different in the city.

Part Music

MOTHER had acted strangely all morning, and then she took so long to dress and get ready that I thought maybe she was going to take me to a surprise party. I didn't ask her any questions, because Mother's sort of nervous and children bother her sometimes.

We went down town and then turned up the hill to the big, white building. Of course, I'd always known it was the court-house, but I'd never been in there. Little Bobby White's father was one of the judges, the big judge, not the little one, and he stayed up there all the time. I wondered if Mother'd let me see Bobby White's father.

After we got up the stairs Mother walked real fast, just as if she was going to do something and wanted to get it done in a hurry, the way I feel sometimes when I have to wash the dishes. We went through a great big door that swung in the middle and into a dark room where there were heavy curtains over the windows, and where some men were talking to another man who sat up on sort of a box with a bright light over it.

I got all excited and whispered to Mother if that was Bobby White's father. She didn't answer me. She was real nervous, and I guess she didn't hear me. Mother's like that sometimes.

We sat down and after a while the men got through talking, and then another man that sat down in front of the judge said something about a case waiting with parties in court, and a big, fat man got up and said, "Mrs. Darling, come forward," and Mother got up and walked right behind the fence that ran across the room. She went in there and a man made her hold up her right hand, and then there was a lot of talking and Mother sat down on a chair that was up right by the judge.

My, but I felt proud to think that my own mother could go right on up there and sit down right near Bobby White's father.

Then the fat man commenced to talk, asking a lot of questions, and using a lot of funny words I couldn't understand. He must have been a school-teacher or something, I thought, the way he used all those words. Even after I grew up and got to be a big girl I could remember



A Christmas Story

and Part Tears

the way that fat man used all those words just as easy as I'd ask some simple little question.

After a while Bobby White's father got to asking some more questions and the fat man just quit talking when the judge said anything. Bobby White's father must be a big man the way they all treated him around that courthouse. When he said anything they all listened. He seemed awfully nice, too. He talked low and I couldn't hear all he said, and I couldn't understand what I did hear.

All of this time Mother was answering questions, and she had her head down and talked so low I couldn't hear a single word she said. Finally the judge nodded his head and said something to the fat man about something being "granted" and the fat man said, "That's all, Mrs. Darling," and Mother got up and came back down to where I was sitting.

Then I saw that she was crying. My, I wouldn't think she'd cry when she had a chance to go and sit up side of Judge White that way. Daddy was away on a trip somewhere, but I bet he'd have been proud if he knew what was happening.

Right away Mother took me by the hand and we went back home. All that afternoon Mother'd laugh a little and cry a little. Somebody called up on the telephone, and Mother answered and seemed all excited, but she didn't tell me a word about what it was all about. Mother doesn't like to have little girls ask questions, so I pretend I don't notice lots of things, and just don't say a word. Daddy's different. He likes to have me ask him all sorts of questions.

I'VE sat on his lap hours at a time asking him questions about things, and he'll sit there and make funny answers, and then he'll laugh; but I can't tell whether it's at my questions or at his own answers.

After that things seemed different, somehow. For one thing, Mother didn't want me to talk so much about Daddy. He was away on a great big trip this time, and Mother couldn't tell me when he was coming home. Most times when Daddy'd be away Mother could tell just when he'd be home, and she'd mark the day on the calendar and I'd take a pencil and mark off the days every time

I got up in the morning, and that way I could keep track of when he'd be back.

This trip was different. Daddy didn't know when he was coming home, and the mail-man got so he didn't have any letters from Daddy, only once in a long while, and then the letters would just be little short ones with a blue piece of paper in them, and sometimes he wouldn't send anything except the blue paper.

I guess that I got used to it after a while, and the days didn't seem so long. Mother seemed sort of restless, and I wasn't surprised when she said we were going to move. I knew Mother never had liked the little town we lived in. She had been raised in the city and she'd always talk to Daddy about going back there to live.

Then one day Mrs. Purdy took me for a ride in their automobile, and we went all around town, up on the hill and over the river road. Mother didn't go, because she had a headache. Coming back we drove right down the main street, and all of a sudden I saw Daddy!

At first I thought

I must be having a dream or something, because Mother hadn't said a thing about him coming back. I rubbed my eyes and looked again, and there he was, standing in front of a cigar store, looking sort of lonesome, like he didn't know what he was going to do next. His shoulders were sort of slumped forward, and he looked as though he'd been sick, but I knew him in a minute.

I tried to yell to him, but he'd sort of taken my breath away and I didn't have a chance to get out a sound until after the automobile had swung around the corner. I started to tell Mrs. Purdy and have her go back, but then I changed my mind. Mother's always taught me never to say anything about our family affairs to anyone, and never to interrupt grown people when they're talking, and Mr. Purdy was telling something to Mrs. Purdy.

When we got home I was so excited I rushed in to Mother's room, and whispered to her, "Oh, Mother, Daddy's back! I saw him on the street. He must have got in on the train and he'll be right home."

Mother started a little bit, then she turned over so her

face was to the wall. And she didn't act a bit glad.

"Is that so, dearie? Run along now; Mother doesn't feel well, and she doesn't want to be disturbed just now."

I thought that was an awfully funny way for her to act when Daddy was just back from his trip. She didn't seem pleased the way I thought she'd be at all. Still Mother's sort of queer when she doesn't feel well.

And then a funny thing happened. Daddy didn't come home at all. I asked Mother about it and she said he'd had



She'd put on her best dress and was all fixed up in her prettiest.

"All right, Mother. Come and see what Santy brought you."

to go away on another trip right after he got home. I was so disappointed I cried myself to sleep that night. It was so strange for Daddy to treat us that way. He'd never been like that before. Why, I can remember nearly every time my daddy's come home from a long trip, and he's been just like he was a little boy himself, and he'd come running up the walk and kiss Mother and grab me up in his arms, and go in the front room and sit

and listen to everything Mother had to tell him, while I'd sit there with my arm around his neck, and then he'd ask me what I'd been doing while he'd been gone, and he'd

sit and listen to every little thing I had to tell him and ask questions, and everything; and once when my cat died while he was gone, and I told him about it, and cried, I noticed that Daddy cried a little bit.



I couldn't imagine my Daddy's coming home from a trip and standing out in front of a cigar store and not coming right straight home. Especially if he had to go away on another trip right away.

We moved down to the city while Daddy was away. My! he sure was gone a long time. It seemed ages since I'd cuddled up in his lap.

A lot of folks came in to say good-by, folks I hadn't seen for a long while. Somehow since Daddy'd taken that last trip folks hadn't been coming in as often as

they'd used to. I guess it was because they missed his laugh. When he was home and people came in he seemed to keep them laughing all the time.

I didn't like the city at all at first, but Mother seemed a whole lot happier. We had a little apartment there in a house that was built almost like a hotel, and where they had a girl at a desk down in the front hall.

There were lots of nice people in that house, and they all seemed to take an interest in me, and every time I got a chance I'd go and sit around the desk and talk with the people that would stop to talk with me. It was lots of fun but it wasn't like the good times I used to have hiking down by the river with the other girls after school, and I didn't see so many children, and there were the noises of the city grinding past the door all the time.

MOTHER made more friends down there, and they used to come in nearly every night, and there was lots of talking and laughing, and Mother seemed to be more jolly, although she didn't seem so happy daytimes. The apartment was small and my bedroom was right next to the sitting-room, and they would keep me awake making so much noise, but I never said anything, because I was so glad Mother was having a good time.

I noticed that the folks there did lots of drinking, and they'd bring bottles with them when they came. Daddy never did things like that, and at first I didn't think it was nice of people to do those things, but Mother said things were different in the city, and I mustn't talk so much, anyway. Little children were to be seen but not heard, and if I couldn't go to sleep nights without lying awake and listening and watching, I'd have to go to some boarding-school. So after that I didn't say anything.

Mother looked awfully tired those days, and there were funny little lines around her eyes like she'd been disappointed some way.

Gradually I'd learned about Daddy. I learned lots of things in the city, and I learned that Mother and Daddy weren't living together any more; that she'd got a divorce from him. That was what that was all about that day way back there when I was in court with Mother.

Then one day there came a ring at the door-bell, and I went to the door. Mother was away somewhere, and I went to see who was ringing. There was a man standing there, and I told him that Mother was out . . . It was sort of dark there in the hall, and I heard something like a sob, and I looked up, and it was Daddy. He stooped over and picked me up in his arms, and then he came in and sat down, and I sat down in his lap like I used to do when I was a tiny, little girl, and he asked me all about how I liked the city, and whether or not I wanted to go back to the country, and lots of things.

He didn't ask me anything about Mother, but I sort of thought that he wanted to, so I answered all the questions telling him about Mother.

After a while Mother came in, and her hand flew up to her throat and she acted as though she was going to fall over, but Daddy jumped up and caught her. After that she treated Daddy just like he'd been a visitor she didn't know very well, and she made an excuse to get up and go into the other room. She said she had a headache.

DADDY was strange after she'd gone, and he only stayed a few minutes. I asked him when he was coming back, and he said he didn't know. He treated me sort of distant like, too, and I didn't like that. I was so sorry Mother had come in just when she did, and sorry that she had to treat Daddy that way. It was getting to be just like old times, and I was sitting there with Daddy and feeling so sort of comfortable. There's something about Daddy that makes you feel that way. He's so big and strong and you can sit in his lap [Turn to page 94]



So Easy

By MARGARET SANGSTER

THEY called her the flapper of Doyer Street, for she danced where the lights were white, To the vivid blare of the saxophone, through the splendid Broadway night; And her hair was bobbed, and her penciled brows made an arch above each eye, And her skirts were short and her stockings sheer and her heels three inches high!

Her laughter was like a slender breeze, it was gay and soft and brave, And her eyes were mad as an April storm, as a gull that knows the waves; And she turned away from her father's scowl, from her frightened mother's glance, And her soul was swept with the silver sheen of adventure and romance.

They had promised her, in the ancient way, to a man across the sea, Who dealt in spices and bolts of silk, in perfumes and rice and tea; But she shrugged at the tale that her father told, of a future he had planned, And she wafted worry and care away with the flick of a careless hand.

Her name was really a charming name, for they called her Helen Toy— One, looking at her, could only think of a plaything made for joy! There was something doll-like and rather quaint in each tiny step she took, Oh, she was a bit of lyric verse, from a blue and orchid book!

She clerked, sometimes, in a candy shop, where she wore her native dress, And once she danced in a smart revue—for a month or two, I guess; And often she posed for artist folk, who painted her slanting eyes, But never quite caught the gleam in them that was young, yet strangely wise!

It was posing the girl loved best, I think, for there was a certain lad, Who shaped her likeness in pastel tints, with all of the skill he had; He was very young and he did his work in a shabby attic room, But his brushes were tipped with that magic thing that can banish doubt and gloom!

Oh, he was the West, and she was the East—but sometimes their glances flamed— And each of them knew as life's wonder grew, though that wonder went unnamed; And often he painted her by the day, and danced with her through the hours, When New York blooms like a garden place with a million flame-white flowers!

Her father spoke (when he spoke at all!) of a marriage looming near, Of a man who was almost a merchant prince—but the girl seemed scarce to hear. And her mother watched with an anxious face—and, sometimes, when quite alone, She sobbed for the dreams in her daughter's eyes, and for dreams her youth had known!

Life slipped along, like a thread of silk, through the hands of Helen Toy, But the soul of the artist grew apace—he had been a carefree boy, But love had caught him against her breast, he was wrapped in passion's cloak— And, one day, he laid his brushes by—and turned to the girl, and spoke.

"I love you, Helen," he said. Just that—but he did not try to hide The throb in his voice, and the girl who heard was suddenly glorified; And despite the paint on her pursed-up mouth, and her skirts and stockings sheer, She was sweet and simple and very grave as she said—"I lo-ove you, dear!"

Oh, she was the East and he was the West—and never the twain shall meet! But they planned a future of rose and gold as he sat at her tiny feet, And sometimes her fingers touched his hair, and sometimes she bent her head, And laughed with a wistful, half-shy mirth, as she kissed his lips instead!

Can I make you see her—a modern girl in an occidental gown, A pulse of the flaming, throbbing heart of an ultra-modern town? Brought up to read in the primer books that the white-skinned children read, And taught to think with the brains that God had put in her dark, sleek head!



Can I make you see her? I think I can—
in her home in Doyer Street,
Where the walls were hung with embroidered silk,
and the incense smoke was sweet?
Where gilded gods of her people frowned
from a lacquered, inlaid stand,
And her mother watched with an anxious glance,
from behind a shaking hand!

It would be so easy, the boy had said,
to elope. Her father's way
Had pledged slim youth to an unknown man,
grown flabby and stout and gray—
It *would* be easy! As Helen packed
a bag with her pretty things,
Her heart was light as the springtime song
that a waking robin sings!

The boy would wait in the street outside—
when her family soundly slept,
So they had planned, she would go to him . . .
Like a tiny mouse she crept
Through the silent rooms of the silent flat
that the sea of night had drowned,
Until she paused by the lacquer stand
where the gods of her fathers frowned.

And all at once, as she waited there,
she could feel their angry eyes,
And over the troubled centuries
she could almost hear their cries,
While the boy looked up from the street below,
with his sweetheart nearly won,
She could hear them say in the old world way,
"But what of your son—*your son?*"

They called her the flapper of Doyer Street—
I have tried to tell you why,
But something clutched at her frightened heart,
and she stilled a sudden cry.
And the gods of her fathers stared at her,
in an ugly, sneering row—
And they mocked from the shadows—"Love awaits,
if you really dare to go!"

They mocked from the shadows, "You belong
to the dusty years before,"
And Helen turned, like a punished child,
from the luring, unlocked door—
From the street below came a whistled call,
just one eerie, longing note—
But she stood like a little golden ghost,
with her hands against her throat!

She had learned the creed of the western land
in the faith-filled mission school,
She had learned the words of a Psalm or two,
and she knew the Golden Rule,
She had danced through the splendid Broadway night,
and laughed through its brief noonday,
But for all of that she was alien—
and the gods had barred her way.

The artist? He married, in time, they say—he has grown to sudden fame,
And the dealers speak in a pleasant voice, whenever they use his name;
But there is one picture he never shows, but will keep until he dies,
The face of a girl with an elfin smile and with slanting April eyes!

And Helen? She wedded the merchant prince who came from beyond the sea,
Who dealt in perfume and tiny fans, in incense and rice and tea;
And he took her back to his stranger home, in a town remote and old,
And he never spoke of her western life, and she, of course, never told . . .

Oh, she shaved her brows—for her man still clung to the customs of his race—
And she blackened her teeth with the betel-nut, and enameled her piquant face;
But, often, I think when she's quite alone, frail memories fill her breast,
For sometimes she bums a bit of jazz as she rocks her child to rest!



Fighting T. for Time

NO, FOUR EYES, you can't play with us. Go home where you belong. We don't want you. Get some girls or some dolls to play with."

The words, snapped in angry boyish tones, came to me through the open window of my room, where I was hastily changing my "school suit" for some older clothing, getting ready to join the other boys of the neighborhood in a game of ball.

"But I don't want to play with girls. It ain't fair you won't let me play with you." There was a tremor in the voice which replied, as if the one who had spoken was almost on the verge of tears.

I knew what the cries meant. Sammy Landau was trying to join the boys below at their game. And they, as usual, were sending him away. On a hundred such occasions I had stood by Sammy. And, knowing I was needed by him once more, I finished lacing my shoes with frantic haste and reached for my cap.

Again came an angry youthful shout. "If it wasn't for your specs I'd give you something that'd send you home —hawling. Now go on 'fore I get mad."

"I won't. You shan't make me. You've no right——"

The next instant I had dropped from my window into the front yard, giving a yell of warning as I did so, and ran pell-mell into the street.

I was just in time. For "Slim" Harris, red of face and thoroughly angry, his fists doubled, was advancing upon Sammy, encouraged by the jeers and laughter of a dozen other lads.

My cry had brought Slim to a momentary pause. And before he could set himself to attack the weaker boy, I was between them.

CUT it, Slim," I said. "You know I can lick you. And I'll do it if you touch Sammy. Why don't you fellers stop picking on him? He never did you any harm."

"Oh, he's a siss. We don't want him," growled Slim in a sort of shamed drawl. For I had thrashed him repeatedly for mistreating Sammy. And he lacked the nerve to pitch into me.

"He's no siss," I answered. "He's just unlucky, because he's got to wear glasses. He's going to play, or I don't."

"Well, then," said Slim, with an unexpected show of belligerency, "you don't play. We've decided he's out, and that settles it." And he turned and walked away, followed by the others.

For a moment I was tempted to follow—and fight.

... while
Mitzi was
fighting
inwardly
against an
agony that
had to be
concealed.



But there was a finality in the conduct of the boys which indicated that, at last, they had turned against Sammy as a whole. And giving Slim a beating would not help matters.

Then I swung and looked at the object of their wrath. If he had been crying I would not have been surprised. But he wasn't. His face was a sickly white, his mouth was set hard and his eyes were narrow and dark with hate.

Sammy Landau was not the kind of a lad whom nature had intended for sports and running. Though but twelve, two years younger than I, he was overgrown and fat, clumsy in his movements, and his weak eyes peered through thick glasses, always reminding me of a perpetually squinting owl.

However, while his appearance might have made him an object of ridicule, I realized the feeling against him was deeper seated. Sammy was a regular book-worm—and one who remembered what he read. In school he was the best pupil, ever ready with an answer. And his perfection in his studies and the repeated compliments of his teacher were the cause of much of the resentment against him.

But there were other things. His father, proprietor

*A
Delightful
Story of
the Stage
and a Man's
Desire to
Avenge a
Wrong*



And then we hoped he would be able to go through with his role, after a fashion.

of the general store of the little Mid-Western town on "the edge of nowhere," in which we lived, was the wealthiest man in the place. And that, despite the fact that he had come to Elm Grove five years before with nothing but a wife, Sammy, and a wagon-load of cheap household utensils such as sold by itinerant peddlers.

However, by working early and late—both the elder Landau and his wife—scrimping, saving and bargaining, the father had turned their thrift and industry into a fortune. He was lending money to those who scarcely nodded to him when he arrived in Elm Grove. He held mortgages on the possessions of several of his neighbors. But, even if he was liked by them but little better than his son was by his school-fellows, he was absolutely

honest to the penny. And he sold cheaper than any storekeeper for ten miles around. For that he was patronized and prospered.

The elder Landau, better than anyone else, realized the disfavor in which his son was held. And, in an attempt to remove some of the sting, dressed Sammy better than any of us boys and gave him more spending money each week than any other lad in town had in a month. All these things told against him, spoiled any chance of his becoming popular; particularly as he put most of his nickels, dimes and quarters in the local bank, and made a show of carrying his bankbook in the breast pocket of his coat, with part of the cover protruding.

I never knew why I took upon myself the job of protecting him; he was not my kind at all. I guess it was a sense of fair play I inherited from my father,



"A 3 A. M. caller! And we had to dress and see him. And what do you think he wanted?"

foreman in the tannery. Though bigger and stronger than any man there, and with some mighty rough men under him, he never had a fight. Everybody worked with him because they liked him. "Square" Carey, they called him.

"Well, Sammy," I said, forcing a grin, "it looks like you and me are out of it for the day. Come help me dig some bait and we'll go down to the river and catch some fish."

"Dan," he answered, "you're awful good not to chase me. I'll never forget it."

"Shut up," I roared, for Sammy's thanks always made me uncomfortable.

"All right. But I'm going to say something I haven't before. I never do anything to anyone, and yet the boys hate me. Well, I hate them now. I'm tired of it. Some day I'm going to be rich. I'll have so much money I'll

be able to make people do what I want. Then I'll get even. You see if I don't."

Frequently, as time passed, I had occasion to recall the incidents of that July afternoon and the bitter threat made by the boy, who was humiliated to the highest point of frenzy.

But never did they come back more vividly than on another July afternoon, fully forty years after the quarrel and threat, when I was summoned to the private sanctum of the same Sammy Landau.

Opposite me, across a great, flat-topped desk littered with books and manuscripts, he sat—the lad of my thoughts grown up. My arrival he had acknowledged with a nod. Then he had resumed his labors, reading through heavy-rimmed glasses a mass of business documents before him; occasionally pausing to scrawl his signature across one of them. He was positively wrapped up in business.

Fortune had been kinder to him than bad nature. For, though the furnishings on every side of the great room



were both rare and costly, mute evidences of his financial prosperity, he presented a picture the reverse of impressive. The flesh of his youth had multiplied until he was massive, weighing fully two hundred fifty; heavy jowls hung low, almost concealing his collar; his skin was a dull red, and such hair as he possessed extended only from ear to ear above a bulging neck. His features were no more inviting. Deep wrinkles ran from the corners of his ever-squinting eyes, and his mouth was obstinately hard, even in repose.

But I doubt if his personal appearance ever caused him a moment's regret. For Samuel Landau had achieved his great objective—riches and power. In fact, he was one of the country's wealthy men, and almost the controlling factor in the theatrical world. The mighty organization, of which he was the head, had one or more houses in every city where a dollar of profit was to be made. And, if he chose, he could make or break, almost at will, any of those who earned their living behind the footlights.

He had begun his climb with the fortune left him by the father and mother who long since had passed on. His methods had been almost ruthless. To his rivals he had shown no mercy. In one thing, however, he was just.

To those who helped him to add to his fortune, he paid the highest wages—as long as they did his bidding. Those who crossed him he never forgave. More than one such he had driven into theatrical oblivion. Any who reached a point where they no longer were able to turn him in a profit, he dropped from his payroll without compunction—and forgot.

Whether his conduct had been in accordance with his nature or whether he had been made hard by the disappointments of his boyhood days, I never could quite determine. But of one thing I was absolutely certain. For but two persons in the wide world did he entertain affection: his motherless daughter and myself.

The fact that I had become Sam's right-hand man and his trusted assistant, however, was not the result of anything I had done.

It was not long after the well remembered schoolboy quarrel that the elder Landau disposed of all his possessions in Elm Grove and removed with his family to New York City, where he joined relatives in some theatrical enterprise. For a time thereafter Sammy and I exchanged letters, then the correspondence became less frequent, finally ceasing entirely soon after he entered one of the big eastern universities.

I, too, went to college. But as there was no money at home to back me, I had to be satisfied with a little, freshwater institution in the Missouri valley. And it was all I could do to pay my way through, working at all kinds of odd jobs in the school terms and in the Kansas wheat fields in the summer vacations.

After my graduation I entered a great business house in St. Louis, and by hard plugging and persistency won a post of importance and an income which had placed me beyond worry.

Through the newspapers I had kept track of Sammy's progress. He had followed his father into the world of make-believe, and by leaps and bounds had advanced until he was among the greatest of the country's producers and theatre owners.

IT WAS fully twenty-five years after Sammy and I had said our good-byes at the tiny station at Elm Grove before I again saw him, while in New York on a business errand for my firm. On previous occasions when I had been there I had not looked for him. But this time I became so lonesome that I determined to locate him, at least long enough for a chat. It was not until I entered the outer office of his suite in the heart of the Broadway theatrical district that I felt doubts that he would see me. For the room was filled with people, sitting and standing, and all seeking an audience with the powerful Samuel Landau. Nevertheless, I sent my card to him. [Turn to page 120]



*He Had
Never
Been in Love
—and
It Took
an Exciting
Adventure
to Make Him
See Why*

Absent

BECKY, how are we going to buy it when none of us know the French word for olive oil?" An American girl had spoken. But standing in the poorly stocked grocery store of a shell-battered town near the front lines of Verdun, I could hardly believe my ears. For months I hadn't heard so much as a whisper from a girl who spoke my language. I had seen only two American women since going into the lines—Elsie Janis and her mother, who had put on a show for our outfit down in the Toul sector before we poured into the red gap at Chateau-Thierry and helped turn the Boche back from the gates of Paris. Perhaps, at last, the banging of barrages had done something queer to my ears. Maybe, I thought, I was only hearing "things." To make sure, I looked away from the French shopkeeper who was rattling off like a machine gun about some old canned fish he wanted to sell me for meat.

The sight of four American girls in blue nurse uni-

forms made me gasp. Of course, after all, their presence in a Souilly store wasn't entirely without reason. There must be some American hospital nearby. That explained their presence. But it didn't keep me from suddenly feeling like a fish out of water. I became acutely conscious of my awkwardness—my dirtiness. Shifting uneasily from one foot to another, I felt certain that the hole in my breeches was growing larger every minute.

But, somehow the nurses recognized my olive drab uniform under its shellac of mud and stains and beneath the equipment and souvenirs which made me look like a traveling advertisement of Pan Handle Pete of former funny paper fame. I didn't dare divide the girls into individuals, but kept my eyes scampering over the group. There was safety in numbers. At least I kept up this performance until one of them looked directly at me. My eyes stopped rolling, as if a general had halted me. There was appeal in the girl's glance. She wanted help of some



*Captain Stone was asking her name
and hospital address.*

WITHOUT Leave

kind. But, as if she had not yet decided how I could help, she kept listening to the soft hub-bub going on between her companions.

"Que voulez vous? Mam'selles?" the man in the shop demanded.

The feminine council of war ended abruptly. All of us, including the eager Frenchman, looked absolutely helpless. I measured the distance to the front door with a furtive glance.

"Say something to the man, Marie," pleaded one of the girls to the nurse who had appealed to me in silence.

"Yes, for heaven's sake, do. He will think we are all dumbbells or—cuckoo," begged another of the quartette.

Once more the girl named Marie, whose blue eyes had brought my own to a sudden focus on her slim young self, shot me another appealing glance. I realized she wanted me to interpret their wants to the Frenchman. Then and there I cursed myself inwardly for having lost my little

French dictionary. Again, on the point of bolting through the door without the eggs I had hiked nine kilometers to buy, I stood my ground. But, only because Marie was addressing me in the softest voice I had ever heard.

"Do you know the French word for olive oil—please—"

HER blue eyes said she knew I was embarrassed and that she was sorry. All of this time I stood there floundering for an answer, vaguely noting that there was a mysterious violet mist in the depths of her eyes, that her hair was a curly brown where it showed beyond her nurse's overseas cap—and that she was very pretty.

"N—no, ma'am, I don't," I managed to stammer at last. Then a bright idea came to me—foolishly bright, I should say. "I can say eggs in French and——" then I stopped short for two of the girls were laughing outright.

"Anybody can say that," one of the laughing nurses cried.

Under a coating of grime that had accumulated on my face since a long ago adventure with soap and water, I flushed red and hot over the knowledge that I had made a fool of myself.

As this embarrassing realization dawned, the Frenchman tried to ascertain their wants again. He didn't have any luck. The girls went out bemoaning the fact that the war was being fought in a country where storekeepers couldn't savvy American. What could they do next?

Marie was the last to file out. My eyes trailed her, communicating the fact that even the plain, white uniform she wore could not hide her trim lines. The smile she flashed me upon turning out of sight inspired me to try one more session with the Frog. If I could only make good with that olive oil — well, maybe Marie would forget I was only a mud-caked corporal and would give me another chance to drown myself in the violet mystery of her eyes. Otherwise I would have to trudge back the nine kilometers to where my battery's guns were camouflaged awaiting orders to move into position, knowing that I had lost my one and only romantic opportunity as a member of the A. E. F.

So I turned gingerly to the Frenchman, determined to ask for that olive oil, now that the girls were out of hearing.

"Avez vous — olive oil—compre? —you savvy, comes in a bottle. Come-see, comesaw," I said, making gestures with my hands to describe a bottle.

"Non, pascompre," assured Frenchy solemnly.

I jerked my shapeless oversea's cap off and scratched my head in a sort of expert manner. Then I launched a counter-attack against the language of France. Somehow, I foolishly believed the word "essence" might mean olive oil.

"Avez vous essence pour salad?" I queried, not very sure of my words.

"Ah," exclaimed the man, "non—pas essence ici," and

he directed me to a French motor repair camp where gasoline could be bought for military motors.

"Thanks," I said, none the wiser then.

I almost bumped into the four girls. They were standing on the corner engaged in a fresh debate. I drew myself up to a full six feet and approached them.

"I just asked the man if he had some olive oil. I—I'm sorry he hasn't a drop," I blurted.

Before Marie could answer, the girl named Becky caused me to feel as if I had a fever.

"I thought you didn't know the French word for olive oil," she demanded.

The eyes of every girl were staring hard at me as if they questioned me as Becky had. I looked imploringly toward Marie. But for the first time she failed me. Down in the violet mists that appeared below the surface blue of her eyes I recognized a demand for an explanation.

"I didn't — that is, I mean, I thought I didn't — but it came to me after you left."

"Ah!" they chorused, almost breaking into a laugh.

I am sure I would have retreated then and there if a hearty salutation had not startled all of us.

"Bon jour, Eddie," I returned, relieved to find my Supply Sergeant accompanied by Bill Loomis and Tommy Gray.

"Find any eggs yet? I'm hungry as hell, buddy—" admitted Gray brazenly before he was aware that the four girls were American. In fact, I don't believe any of my buddies had given a thought to

the possibility of the girls being American. They had become non-entities in our lives long ago. We thought of them only as dream persons—persons we had left behind at home. Tommy Gray began to study the ground and shuffle uneasily. Silence brooded for a few seconds.

But, the girl whose name was Becky, and who seemed ever ready with something to say, didn't allow the spell of silence to prevail.

"You must be mighty hungry, buddy," she shot out, mischievously. The "buddy" stuff warmed Gray to the very marrow of his bones [Turn to page 95]



Does Your Husband Love You?

Another \$100 SMART SET Prize for the best story about "How I Lost My Husband."

Here is a burning question in many a girl's heart when the first year of married life has slipped away and commonplace things have taken the place of the thrilling days which made up the honeymoon time.

And SMART SET wants to learn what is behind it all. What causes the unrest? Why has he drifted away?

So we are going to pay \$100 for the best story of not more than 500 words on the subject, "How I Lost My Husband." There will be four other prizes of fifty dollars each for the next best stories.

This doesn't mean that he must have left you. It doesn't mean that you need to have been divorced—but simply that he has drifted away. Perhaps when you write it you will see your way more clearly. Perhaps what others say may help you. See page 72.



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Chi SMART SET Girls



BYRD MAGUIRE is a home girl who has lived all her life in Chicago. She is twenty, a high school graduate, and has light brown hair and blue eyes. She is seated on the floor at the left of this group of girls chosen by the Chicago American as the most beautiful in the SMART SET girl contest in that city.



ADDIE MCPHAIL is a slender girl with brown hair and dark eyes. Immediately after her picture was published by the American she was asked to come to Hollywood for a trial by a movie company. The tests were very successful and we will hear from her.



JEAN MARRE is a distinct blond with clear blue eyes. She lives with her parents and is fond of travel and the out-of-doors. Just at present she has her heart set on a stage career. Judging from this picture and that wholesome smile, we think she has a good chance.



MARION RICE, only seventeen years old, has already won fame as a bathing beauty in her home city. She has brown hair and eyes, and the judges called her figure the most perfect in a contest that covered Chicago.

Shall I Go to Him?

*This
Story
Presents
the Crisis
in a
Woman's
Life.*



IHAVE a problem to solve, a very difficult problem. It concerns not only myself and him who has been, and still is; dearer than life to me, but another precious little life. I must make my decision soon, and God grant that I may not decide wrong.

Many women have been confronted with the problem of an unfaithful husband, but I have never known a case where the facts were similar to mine.

When Dick and I were married we were very much in love. I had been brought up by an old-fashioned mother, and due to her teachings had kept myself for the one man. I had had many beaus, but never any other lover. Naturally when I did come into my own it meant the breath of life to me.

We lived in three little rooms, not expensively furnished, which was all we could afford. It was my loving duty to keep them neat and clean, and I was very happy and contented in catering to Dick's every whim.

But I found it hard to convince Dick that I was satisfied with my lot. When he would bring his pay check home he would always grumble.

"It is so little to what you have been accustomed," he would say. "I should be giving you a beautiful home and clothes and money to spend."

"But I am willing to wait, dear, until I can have all those things," I would tell him. "It gives me more pleasure to know you did your duty by your mother and sister when they needed you than it would had you

neglected them and saved your money. After all, nothing matters so long as we have each other."

He was then manager of one of a chain of stores. It was his one ambition to have such a store of his own. Each week we put away as much as possible out of the pay check so that he might some day realize his ambition.

He came home one night moody and ill-tempered. To my sympathetic and loving advances he appeared abstracted and unconcerned. The next night he was worse

—wholly unlike his usual self. The third night I almost dreaded to have him come home.

When he did come he was so joyous and happy I could scarcely fathom the change in him. At last he was to realize his dream, he told me. He would have his own store, the best in the city. When I asked where he would get the money he explained that a friend whom he had been able to help some years ago had made good and was now offering to help him.

I had no reason to doubt him.

In fact, I never thought of such a thing.

Fortunately he hit upon a good location. This and his many years of experience helped him to a quick success. We soon had a pretty little home of our own and I had my own little car.

Dick was again my devoted, happy lover, even though business made such big demands on his time that I seldom had him alone for an evening.

I spent much of my time these [Turn to page 81]

Picture it, that half-woman, thrown to the champagne-guzzling Latins, the pleasure-obsessed tourists, the leering low-class natives, the sinister degenerates of that wide-open tropical underworld—not only in it, but of it.



1001 NIGHTS

As Told to

THERE was something inexpressibly dramatic in the recital by Jane Henderson, who had lived so much in her few years, who had known the touch of pearls about her soft neck as well as the welts of blows upon her tender skin, as she told me how she felt when she banged the door of the Pettigrew mansion behind her and walked out of her first job, her first infatuation, her first rebellion.

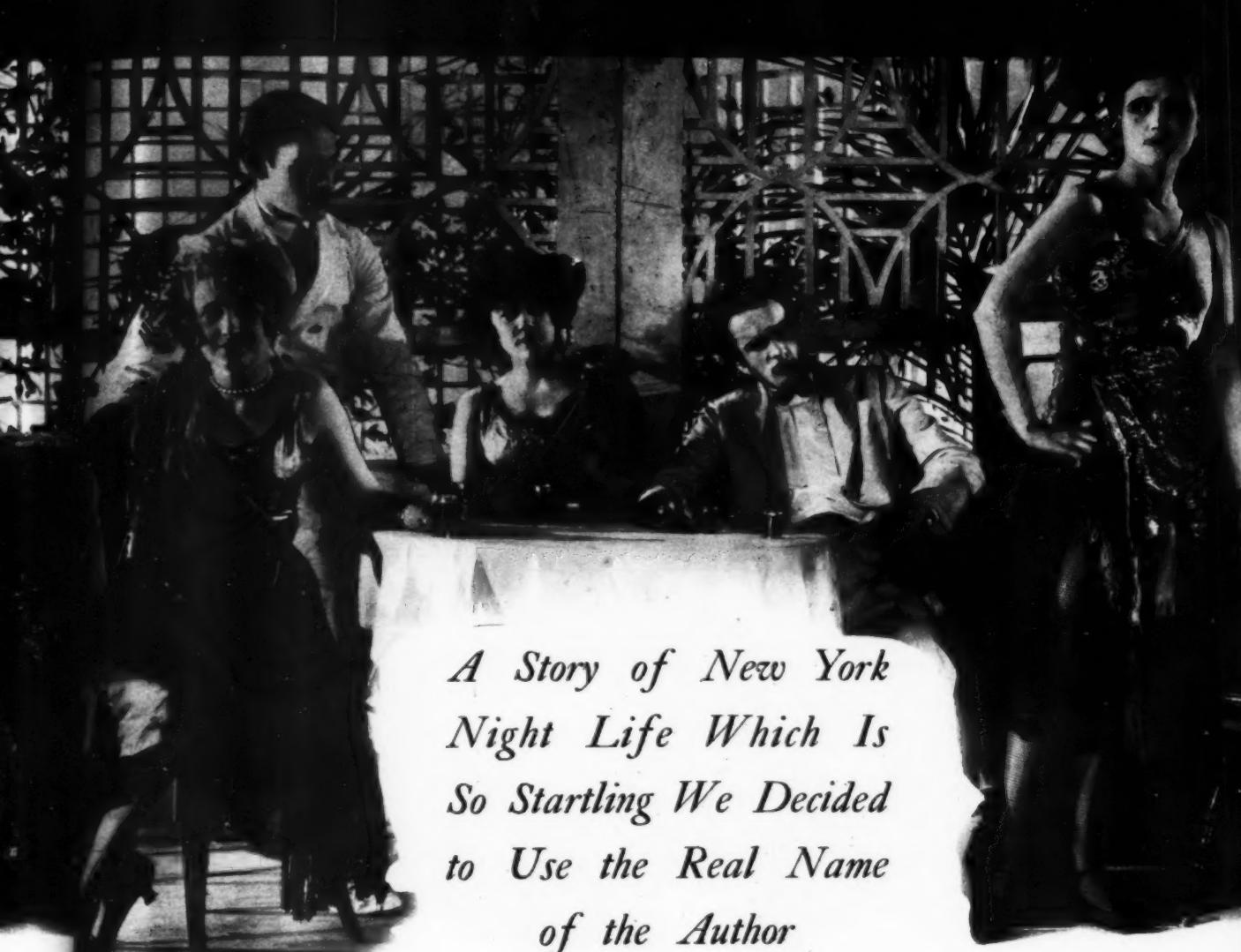
There she stood, at two o'clock in the morning, on a deserted street in Chicago, grasping a canvas telescope, bewildered, befogged, hot with furious anger, chilled with the sudden realization of her precarious position.

In her pocket she had three pennies. Five minutes before, she had torn a twenty-dollar bill to confetti and showered the bits into the flushed face of the young man she had adored, and who had sought to buy with that yellow-back one manifestation of a love which she would have given him a millionfold for nothing but the thrill of a great passion, a passion which can be great even in an underdeveloped female child of fifteen.

Now, the anti-climax was garish—gaudily garish. She had flouted and defied and shouted down a party of millionaires in their own stronghold; she had rent her wild love from her skinny bosom and stood like a tiny David against a gilded Goliath; she had flounced out like a queen as they all stood there like sheep; and here she was!

The only place under the unfriendly dome of the black sky where she could go was back to the miserable tenement on Peoria Street which she had left so hopefully and so jocundly to go into service in that half-mythical realm of wealth and wealth's ways and wonders.

There she could come a-crawling back to her scrub-woman mother, her two soiled little sisters, her tough little brother, her dishwashing, her swill-carrying, the nagging and the poverty and the dirt and the reek and



*A Story of New York
Night Life Which Is
So Startling We Decided
to Use the Real Name
of the Author*

on Broadway

Ruth Fallows

the murk and the work and the horizonless hopelessness—back into that into which she was born, and out of which she had fancied herself with that quick optimism of youth, emancipated.

And, to make it even more bizarre in the grim playfulness of irony, she was miles from there and it was past two o'clock in the morning, and she had three pennies.

She didn't even know the way—to walk; she knew only that two blocks away was a street-car line, on Clark Street, and that this led to the center of the city, where there was another artery called Madison Street, which led to that fester-spot known as Peoria Street, where lived the Handersons between the barrel-houses and the hobos' flops and the gin-mills and the rookeries—and worse.

She started. The side street along which her hurrying feet stumbled on was dark. She gained Clark Street,

which at that hour and in that sector wasn't much less so. Down Clark Street south she trudged. In those days saloons were as legal as butcher-shops. On almost every corner there was one, and on some there were four in that neighborhood. Here and there a drunken night-hawk whistled at her or clucked to her or called at her.

AN OCCASIONAL sister of the night, of the sort which in those days and in that locality used to roam and skulk through the post-midnight hours, looked at her quizzically—no, she couldn't be one of them; yet, what was she doing there, then?

As she dodged the roisterers and made her way onward, she came into even more sinister blocks. Clark Street, for three-quarters of a mile above the river, was about as low and bawdy a stretch as America knew, and its heyday was in the night.

Nickel-whiskey dives, yeggs' rendezvous, floaters' hotels and bed-houses, sailors' hangouts, disorderly dance-halls and box-dives where painted jezebels cajoled

beggars and beasts and bums; where crooks and convicts congregated, where gunnen and sluggers gravitated—around the County Jail and the long, black bridge—it was a seething Sodom.

Through that, toward three o'clock in the morning, fluttered this heartsick, homesick girl, too young for a woman who could brave such things, too old to still believe herself still a child who was safe among them.

AT THE corner of Illinois Street, after she had already wrestled and struggled herself out of the clutches of more than one ruffian—for there and then the habitues asked few questions and made few allowances—she found herself, before she knew it, surrounded by a group of street-corner roustabouts. Into her confused ears rang insults, coarse, blunt, not to be misunderstood even by a baby.

Her puny arms were held by crawny hands. She felt herself lifted from her feet. Hot, booze-sodden breaths scorched her cheeks. She had a dying sensation of a faint, but with a last surviving atom of fight she screamed. A big, rasping hand was clapped over her little mouth. But a policeman around the corner heard the single, despairing cry, and came on the run.

He whanged his nightstick over the head of the bruiser who was gagging Jane. With his fist he sent another who was carrying her sprawling. The ruffians ran. Jane, panting, sobbing, fainting, was alone with the friendly bluecoat. He picked up her battered telescope, took her by the arm, and asked her who she was and where she was going—and why. She stammered out her story, as much of it as he needed to know.

The patrolman scratched his head. Here was a dilemma. He couldn't accompany her, because he didn't dare go past the barriers of his beat. To send her along would invite just what he had rescued her from, for before her lay even darker and more malodorous crossings. There wasn't a night-car due for more than half an hour, even if he should lend her the two cents she needed to amplify her fortune into a fare; and if she did wait for the car she would ride with drunks and hoodlums, would have to get out and transfer and wait some more, and on the other end would have to walk almost two blocks through an area on the West Side which was as depraved and degraded as the one in which she stood on the North Side.

Then an inspiration struck him—truly a night-walking policeman's solution. He opened the alarm box nearby and pulled a hook. In two minutes, clanging down the street and careening behind two galloping horses, came "the wagon." The officer whispered a few words to the driver and to the two uniformed "cops" who had leaped from the rear step before the "Maria" had even stopped; ready to fight bandits.

The sergeant of them shook his head—it wasn't usual, it wasn't regular. But Jane's knight argued. Finally the driver called out:

"Aw, c'mon, we can get the kid home by the time we stand here fussin' over if we oughta or oughtn'ta . . . hop in, cutie, you're gonna get a carriage-ride on the city."

Almost before Jane knew what it all meant, she was being helped into the dark, smelly patrol wagon, the gong was whanging, and she was being whirled through the town with a policeman on the seat ahead and two big

bluecoats on the narrow ends of the benches behind her.

And thus Jane Henderson, destined to be "glorified" on Broadway, fated to hold rich and mighty men hungrily bidding for a smile or a touch of her hand, came home—came home to Peoria Street in the middle of the night; came home from the palace of the Pettigrews.

On Peoria Street there is always life. Such life as it is, it never declares a full moratorium, or it didn't then, for it was in the center of dens which had thrown away their keys. A patrol-wagon was no novelty there, but, if one hurtled and gonged its way there a thousand times a day, it was still worth crowding around and busybodying over. So a little knot of loafers came on the double quick as the blue bus pulled up with a jerk, a twist and the orthodox back-up before the warped three-story shanty in which the Handersons occupied the second floor rear.

They recognized Jane: she had been born in that house and everyone who knew anyone knew her. She whisked by them all. The wagon was off



on its noisy, crazy way before an explanation could be asked of the John Laws.

It was a local sensation! What did this mean, the Handerson kid being hauled home in the "paddy-cart" at such an hour? Jane, herself, felt that it was a logical question, for she was asking it of herself and couldn't quite formulate a reasonable answer.

She sneaked into her home feeling like the thief she had looked as she alighted from the patrol between two "bulls." The younger children were asleep. Her mother,

who was scrubbing marble floors in a downtown skyscraper, hadn't come home yet.

Jane sank onto a rickety kitchen chair.

Her head was spinning and her limbs were quivering. Her spirit was wilted, her courage had evaporated.

She sat there; she doesn't remember how long. Through her aching brain stumbled a conflicting confusion of thoughts—the first romance of her life, blown up, and the eternal scars burning while the wounds were still so fresh; the bitter and brutal adventures which had followed her flaming, fighting exit out of her dream-world; the horribly hollow, sordidly seamy future to fol-

Jane fought back the tears as she told her little sisters that she was going away—for a long time. They were sleepy. They didn't grasp what it meant.



low the leaden, dingy present. Would it be fair to think of the future in terms of the present?

She heard a shuffling at the door, a key fumbling in the lock; she turned and saw the stooped form of her mother crossing the threshold on her clumping, clumsy, toil-distorted feet. Jane rose—more in response to the animal instinct of defense than in the impulse of affectionate greeting—on Peoria Street there isn't much effusive flubdub, despite the storied family love of the lowly. Her mother raised her head, stopped, hesitated, opened her mouth, agape.

"Wh-what you doink here—home—so early—or so late—what is this for a idea? Why you ain't workink, huh?" she shrilled, in the argot of her nature and station,

and with the low-German dialect of her nativity.

"I—I—lost my job."

"You—what? How? Why? For God's sake, why? . . . Oh, I knew it. I knew such a no-good like you, you couldn't hold no chob wit such a swell peeples . . . So, dey chuck you out, huh?"

"No, Mother. I quit—I walked out."

"You—you did which? You, yourself, you quid a place wit millionaires? Goot in Himmel—are you crazy? What happened then, that you walk out from such a fine place?"

THE son—he—he kissed me—and I—I si-slapped his face—and all the family and guests came running—and, well, if I hadn't walked out, they'd have thrown me out, then."

"He did which? He kissed you? What you mean, he kissed you? How you dare let him kiss you, a rich boy like that? What right you got lollygagging wit such peeples? Don'cha know you ain't got no bitness doin' such a things like that? Didn' I learned you better, you silly, wicked girl?"

"I didn't—he did it all. He grabbed me. He was drunk. He kissed me—and he—he shoved a twenty-dollar bill in my hand."

"Vell—that vas enough. Dat's a lot of money. Where is it—come now, gif me dat twenny—it could be useful till you get yourself anudder chob—if dat effer is again."

"I—I haven't got it—tore it up."

"You—you done what?"

"I tore it to pieces and threw them in his drunken face."

"Ach, Mein Gott! Did you lost your mind? You tore up a twenny - dollar bill? You thankless, heartless fool. I slave and shrup on mine knees, all night effery night for two weeks for twenny dollars—and mine high-toned, looney daughter tears up twenny dollars to throw 'em in millionaires' mugs, huh? It's a nice how d'you do, this is—and she valks yet out from the chob, besides. For this I worked for

you, for this I gif mine life to you . . . look at dem hands . . . look! For you. For you! For you and that crazy fiddlin' fadder o' yours an' them three other brats. My back is broke. My heart is broke . . . and she tears up twenny-dollars an' she quits chobs."

And Mrs. Henderson fell on a chair, weeping and wailing, aloud.

"B—but—Mother—you don't understand——"

"No—neffer do I undershstand. You shrup stone floors from six till six effery night, and you'll understand a whole lot vot you don't undershstand now."

"B—but—surely you wouldn't have me allow him to make free with me without a struggle; you wouldn't sell me for twenty dollars!"

[Turn to page 90]



Deets Pickett

THE reputations of our young people suffer because they are so interesting as to invite close observation, not to say scrutiny. Scrutiny breeds criticism.

Nevertheless, the younger generation is guilty of more spectacular misbehavior than were our fathers and mothers. For one thing, young people today have MORE MONEY on which to be naughty—and the kind of naughtiness of which we are guilty REQUIRES money.

A young lady wrote to a New York editor, "Dear Mr. Editor: Do you think that I can live a good life in New York on \$20.00 a week?" The editor answered, "My dear young lady: That is the only possible kind of a life you could lead in New York on \$20.00 a week."

The
Here Is a Man
Who Dares to
Challenge Those
Who Have Tried
To Exploit Our
Young People
Through What
He Calls:
IMPURITANISM

Together with an abundance of wealth, this age of machinery has multiplied the power of our young people for good or evil. Father's horizon was only about ten miles distant, just about as far as old Dobbin could trot in half a day. Now his son can lunch in Philadelphia, dance the same evening in New York, and be in Philadelphia again for breakfast. Power flowing through all the channels of life has "jazzed" the age.

OUR young people also have MORE TIME in which to misbehave. The hours of leisure are the hours of pleasure. That is when the mischief is done. A generation ago workingmen worked from six o'clock in the morning to six at night for a dollar a day. Even office

Enemies of Youth

By DEETS PICKETT

*Research Secretary of the Board of Temperance, Prohibition,
and Public Morals of the Methodist Episcopal Church.*

workers went to work at eight o'clock and worked till six. Today they work from nine to five, unless they have engagements to play golf, when they quit at two.

BUT, their faults acknowledged, we must claim that young people today are not corrupting America. Insofar as there is corruption, THEY are being corrupted by bald-headed or gray-haired maturity. The motive is two-fold. First, hundreds of thousands of people are making a profit by perverting the natural impulses of youth. Second, there is a group in America of honest, conscientious people who believe that the traditions and customs of America must be changed before we will have any art, literature, or society worthy of respect.

The first group produces our erotic dances, our salacious literature, and the plays which arouse and satisfy prurient curiosity. The second group attacks the prohibition law in cartoons, in comic strips, in the patter of the vaudeville stage, in humorous publications, because it conceives prohibition to be the very flower of puritanism. It assails the Kiwanis, and the Rotary, and the Methodist Church in abusive language. It even attacks the idea of chastity in its novels. It disgraces the stage with nudity which it calls "art," and with profanity and blasphemy which it thinks make more vivid a picture of life.

These people are not interested in the old folk

of the country, whom in the main they believe to be "dolts," "idiots," "morons," "a barbarous peasantry," influenced by "hellfire churches" and a "whirling dervish" ministry. They are interested in the children of these people because they know these children represent the future of America and they are trying to win that future by convincing our children that the solid virtues which we have received as a heritage from Washington and Lincoln and Lee are really old foggy nonsense.

There is much that is ugly about Puritanism. Today it may be that we will have to choose between Puritanism and Impuritanism, for our children. But as for the present, speaking from an intimate knowledge of the subject, I want to express the opinion that the current reports as to the misbehavior of our young people are absurdly exaggerated. Our college youth, both boys and girls, are pictured as drunkards and perverts, but police officials testify that they seldom find college young people in the drinking resorts which they raid in college towns.

DESPITE superficial indications, it is my firm belief that there is less immorality and less dissipation among American young people than ever before and that never before in our history has such a large proportion of American youth been animated by fiery idealism. There are influences at work which may change this state of affairs, but it can not be done during this decade.

The Sudden Interest in

DOWN here in Mexico, on the Rio Grande, if you are a gambler—that is, if you have ability at cards—should you ever find yourself got the best of, illegally, I mean, do not go to the police. Keep your woe from the *autoridades*.

Washington's Birthday celebration is international here on the border. At these celebrations, for five days the crowds, tourists from everywhere, and natives, usually indifferent but now incited by the crowds, flow forth across the river into Mexico, where the high life is. I myself was nearing the bridge that night after supper when I met my friend, Jerry.

Jerry is a night-owl, a connoisseur of Mexican liquors, and generally an old campaigner among the bar-rooms and secret dives "on the other side."

"Where headin', Shorty?" he hailed me.
I had no definite destination. "I don't know," I said. "Where you going?"

"Nowhere. Let's go across the river. One town's as bad as the other."

"Let's go."

We paid our nickel at the international bridge and began the long walk to the other side. We talked.

"Ever play the lottery now-days, Shorty? A railroad brakeman yesterday was notified he won five thousand dollars."

"Lottery? No," said I. "No more lottery for me. Hereafter I do my gambling at a card table. At least I can enjoy playing while they take my money."

Jerry stopped, catching my arm. "Say, you like cards, don't you? Let me put you next to the swellest little gambling dump on the border."

YES? Where?"

"Come with me." And he started off again.

"Wait a minute. Tell me about your gambling hell. Maybe I've been there before."

"No, you haven't. This is select stuff. Only insiders can get in, only people that's known. And you got to have money, too. No second-raters allowed . . . And it ain't a gambling hell."

"Not a hell, eh?"

"No. A hell would mean—well, a bad place, a rough place, a rough house—"

"Oh! They sell pansies and canary birds there, do they?"

"And—er—" went on Jerry enthusiastically, "this place is quiet and orderly and neat. You never saw the likes. Run by a woman."

"By a woman!" It certainly was new to me.

"Yes. Her name's Madama Pancha. Big, fine-lookin' lady. Always dressed nice. Keeps a first-class hall and bar. No rowdy stuff allowed. A guy can gamble all he wants; but if he gets drunk and nasty, out he goes."

"Hm! Must be something new."

"It is. They say the old lady got a pile of jack somehow down in Mexico City and then came here to open this place. It's only a few weeks old, they tell me."

"Hm! I'd like to see it. I've seen all the others, second-and-third-rate joints where nobody ever goes . . . How about the money; is there much of it?"

"Much of it! Wait'll you see. The place is lousy with

A young girl, apparently of good family—and Mexican families are very strict—running alone in a dark street at midnight!

money. Just wait'll you see the kind of men that goes there."

In a few minutes I found myself following Jerry up a dark back stairway. We passed a doorkeeper, and then went down a stairway. And there we were.

So this was the new gambling house. I had to admit it was different. The only two resemblances to the gambling rooms I was accustomed to were the groups of men seated quietly around the tables and the heavy tobacco smoke on the air. As for the rest, everything was different. The floor was decorated here and there with bright-colored little rugs—some, white-and-black checked, others with the flashing stripes of the *navajo* work. The usual dirty cupidors were here gold-colored, shiny things. The tables and chairs were all new, and polished. And the walls all around showed the blazing colors of Indian blankets. There was no doubt about it, the place was operated with a different idea. The standard was obviously higher. The intention, of course, was to gather patrons of the wealthier class.

My Left Hip Pocket



The object, I could see, was accomplished, for the men around the tables were predominantly the higher class Mexicans and Americans. And the Mexican gentlemen were surpassed in number by the American tourists.

"You can tell a tourist every time, can't you?" said Jerry. "They *look* money, *smell* money, and *have* money. Look at 'em."

"Um-hm."

Within ten minutes I had shaken several hands and had taken a place at a table. And within an hour—it sometimes happens—I had "cleaned" three of the men. Others had come to take their places. And when Jerry came over to see what luck I was having, he saw before me a little over two thousand dollars in chips.

*Another Midnight Story
Chosen in the SMART SET
Thriller Contest*

"'Bout to lose yo' last collar-button, Shorty?" he laughed. "You lucky houn'."

"Go away, now, Jerry," I said. I knew that the men were on edge.

The games went on. My luck varied, but I never had much more or less than I had in the first hour.

Midnight came. I had been playing for five hours continuously.

"My bed-time," I said rising. Several faces with cigars bowed assent; some said a genial goodnight; and all hoped to see me back again soon. I took a parting "night-cap" with the table and shook hands again.

I cashed twelve hundred dollars' worth of chips.

Jerry's having left the establishment an hour or so before, I set out for home alone.

BUT things happened. It was not a peaceful walk, under the dim light of the midnight stars, down to the bridge and thence home. No; romance, live romance, seemed awake and abroad that night. I turned the corner of the first block from Madama Pancha's place and there collided with nothing else than a pretty girl!

I say "pretty," but I confess I surmised this. The streets were dark, and I could see nothing of her face but the gentle outline. All else was dim. Yet her voice, her manner of speaking, and what I could see in the contour from her chin to her cheek gave me a quick impression of prettiness.

"Ay!" she cried, drawing back. Her voice seemed terribly distressed.

"Oh! Pardon me," I said. What could this be? A young girl, delicate seeming, apparently of good family—and Mexican families are very strict—running alone in a dark street at midnight!

She stood back, regarding me.

"What is the matter?" I asked in Spanish.

"Please!" she answered, apparently relieved from her first fright. "Do not let that man get me. Listen! please help me."

"What has happened?"

"That man—he will come to find me—to take me with him."

"Who is he?"

"A man. My mother is forcing me to marry him. Oh, I cannot!" She covered her face and ran into the street, to cross to the other side. But, afraid to go on alone, she ran back.

"Go with me, please. Keep him from me."

"Where? Go where?"

"To the house of my girl friend. I will hide there, then I will run away."

I stood, trying to debate with [Turn to page 75]

Will-o'-the-Wisp

Buddy's bolting in on the scene relieved the situation for the moment.



NO MORE disappointed woman ever boarded a train than I, that morning in August when I left Los Angeles for La Jolla and Lillian Armour's delightful cottage on the crags. I had accepted her warm invitation and accepted it in a spirit of keen anticipation, only to have the joy taken from it a few hours later by another invitation which I was compelled to refuse—an invitation from the Stanfords and an opportunity of meeting "Cap" Craig.

The prospect of losing that opportunity of knowing him took all the pleasure out of the pleasant prospect of the month at Lil's, not even the near-by gaieties of San Diego offering any solace.

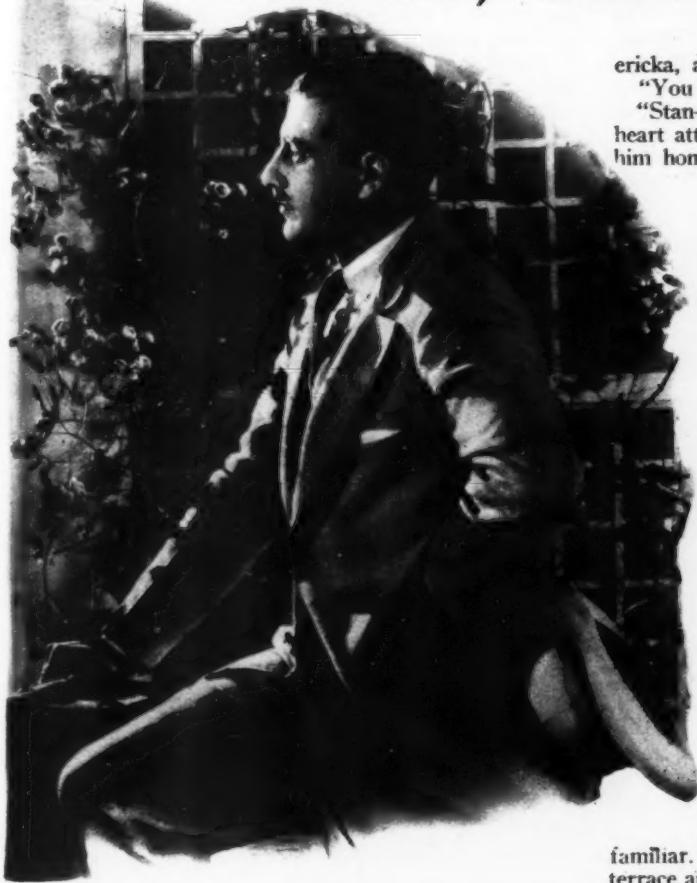
Captain Craig had been with my brother over in France when he died from his wounds about a week after the armistice, and had sent me Bill's last messages, telling

me every detail which he thought might have weight with me, in the kindest letter a man ever wrote. I had answered that letter warmly but with the utmost brevity, being too bound up in the hurt of my loss of dear, big, blundering Bill to have any thought for anyone else at the time. Captain Craig had never written again.

And now had happened the distressful mix-up of missing his visit at the Stanford's by a confiction of dates. I found myself on the train for La Jolla, with as heavy a case of the blues as I have ever carried about with me.

The Craig person might have been flattered had he known my state of mind. I could not get my thoughts off the man, but the fact that I was making myself miserable over a man whom I had neither seen in the flesh nor even visualized on pasteboard, and who might be as homely as a camel in reality, finally called my pride, and as I neared

Pride, or Stubbornness, or Both, Made Fritzi Play with Fire, and—



La Jolla I forced myself to contemplate the prospect of the two weeks ahead with Lil and her hopeful five-year-old with a spirit at least of resignation.

Half the population of La Jolla seemed to be at the station, but no Lil, and checking my suitcase for later chance I walked the five blocks to the Armour's in a mixed state of hope and irritation—irritation against Lil's negligence, and hope that her negligence might give me an excuse for returning to Los Angeles.

La Jolla is always charming, but I saw none of it that morning, and I scarcely wasted a glance on the foam-dashed crags below the drive, as I turned at last and made my way up the stone terrace to Lil's door.

LIL herself opened the door, and gave me the weirdest welcome. She had a hairbrush in her hand, her face was daubed with cold-cream, and her eyes were tragic as she gripped me with her free hand, pulling me into her own room before she said a word.

"Oh, my dear! If you knew how thankful I am to have you here: I just couldn't meet you, and I hadn't a soul to send, and I've just been praying you'd come right out anyway."

"But, Lil, what on earth's the matter? You look—worried sick."

"I'm just about crazy, Fritzi." Everyone called me that. I permitted it because they all choked on Fred-

ericka, and I wouldn't have Fred and detested Fritz. "You poor girl—what on earth has happened?"

"Stan—he's up north—down with one of his terrible heart attacks. He's better, but I've got to go and drive him home. Hannah bolted last night, so I've just got to throw myself on your mercy and ask you to carry on till I get back, because it's impossible for me to take Buddy."

That settled me. My own puny troubles jumped so far into the background that I actually forgot them. I put my arms around poor distracted Lil comfortingly, and my innate executive ability took possession of the household even before I had removed my hat.

"Why, of course I'll carry on, dear goose. I'll love it. Just hustle into your clothes and beat it. Where's Buddy?"

"He's playing in the yard. I haven't told him yet. I knew he'd yell to go, too. I've just got to sneak away. I wish I didn't have to carry a grip."

"Take mine—it's at the station. I'll give you the check. We're just of a size and you'll have plenty, just so you'll let me wear a few of your things."

"You're a dear, Fritzi. That makes it a lot easier. I just got the telegram half an hour ago, and I've been too upset to think. The train leaves in an hour. Please help me keep my head."

We leaped into action with more or less efficiency and in half an hour Lil was ready, except for the usual last minute this and that with which every housewife and mother is familiar. By the time I saw her back retreating down the terrace and turned to glimpse the unknowing Buddy still grubbing gleefully in the sand of the back yard, I heaved a sigh of relief as big as a mountain.

BUt I was too quick. A moment later I heard Lil's heels click again on the tiled porch. She poked her head in breathlessly,

"Fritzi—about money. I almost forgot. I'll stop at the bank and fix it so you can draw to a hundred, and make it more if I have to stay longer than this week."

"Good Heavens, Lil! I shan't need all that."

"You never know—oh, what else was it I wanted to say?"

"Oh, run along—I'll manage. You'll be late, sure as—"

"Oh, I know—" She had started down the terrace but turned and called back at me sotto voice. "You can't use the spare room—have to use mine. Rick's coming—Stan's cousin Rick, but he may not come till I get back. Bye."

It didn't seem to matter to Lil that I didn't know the creature from a house-fly, but I was too anxious to get her off to ask questions.

When her departure was finally accomplished, I flopped on her unmade bed a moment to collect my wits. The house was topsy turvy. I had seen that in the course of my dashing round doing the little things she had asked me before leaving. Lil unaided was a rotten housekeeper, and from the appearance of the kitchen I judged that

Hannah had been little better and had probably left in a huff with the work of the previous day only half completed.

The house itself was lovely: a rambling low stucco structure clinging close to the sea-washed crags, and high enough to make the roar of the waves in the caves beneath a thing of music rather than disturbance. The rooms were built around a court or inner yard, not a four-square one like the usual patio, but a place of nooks and angles which was really more enchanting, and which on the west through an open lattice commanded a lovely view of the shoreline up the coast.

It was here beside this lattice that little Buddy had his sand-box and his shells and all the clutterment that is the joy of a child's heart. I admired Lil for the unselfish wisdom that had given that outlook of far-reaching beauty to the child's play yard. She said it was the only way she would consider the house at all, because Buddy could have no beach to play upon except when she found time to take him the half mile to the nearest available bit of sanded shore.

Buddy was a happy child. I thanked my stars for that, and though I dreaded the moment when I must tell him his mother had gone away, I felt no fear but that I could manage to make him contented again after the first disappointment of being left alone in my charge. He had always liked me, even from tiny babyhood, and he already had given me welcome, having run in to greet me when I had first arrived, just after

Lil and I had settled on our plan of action.

Making a brief visit to him in the yard, and setting him off on a new line of activity by wetting some of the sand for him and showing him how to make three-layer cakes with it, I rushed into the house and got together some scraps for lunch, for I myself was half-famished and I knew the child must be also, since it was nearly one o'clock.

I managed a sort of meal, at the same time making a list of needed things I must get before night.

Buddy came in, joyously muddy, and I realized what I had let Lil in for as I cleaned him up. We sat down rather exhausted, and Buddy chose that moment to open up.

"Where's Mummy?"

"She had to go out."

"Where'd she go?"

"If you'll eat your lunch nicely I'll tell you all about it

afterward and then if you are good I'll take you downtown with me and you can show me which stores Mother shops in."

THAT worked beautifully—I should say unbeautifully, for he began stuffing himself like an enterprising porker. I slowed him up rather ineffectually, though I was so famished myself that I hardly blamed him for gormandizing. We finished in inelegant haste, and Buddy got down from his chair in business-like fashion and came round and hugged me.

"Nice Fritzi," he said, as I leaned down and kissed him. "Det Buddy's hat. We'll go town and find Mummy in the stores."

I drew him into my lap and told him as nicely as I could that Mummy wasn't in the stores, and that she had asked me to go to the stores and buy good things for Buddy until she came back—told him his Daddy was ill and that Mummy had gone to bring him home to him, and that he must be good and help me get the house all nice and



tidy before they came, and that we only had four, five, six days to do it in.

He lay looking at me solemnly, but I felt that I had put over one of the biggest things I had ever accomplished, when he pulled up in my arms and hugged me again with the flattering reiteration, "Nice Fritzi."

We got on famously. I could have hugged the child a dozen times for the sweetness of his disposition, for there were enough other things to rouse the Irish in me without contending with a wayward child.

I didn't manage much that day beyond straightening

up the kitchen enough to cook dinner, and our journey to town, which both of us enjoyed rather better than we should. We came home so late that I had to make another makeshift meal, and I went to bed early vowing an early rising and an orgy of house-cleaning.

I was up before the sun, having in spite of my strange surroundings slept like a top. Buddy was still reposing peacefully in such angelic pose that I longed to hug him.

I searched Lil's closets until I discovered the most



*"Fredericka Harrison! Don't be silly! Why—why—oh, I say—
you're joking!"*

*"Here she is," Stan yelled.
"Fritzi, you little devil, explain
yourself."*

appropriate items of wearing apparel I could unearth and proceeded to don them. My completed toilet was a peach, and to add to its picturesque disfigurement I swathed my head in a towel and pulled from beneath it two tufts of my straight hair.

"There," I told myself, "if the neighbors cast a curious eye in my direction they'll see an efficient and unornamental creature which they're not likely to confuse with Lil's house-guest." I had no mind to be discovered in the role of maid-servant. It would cast more reflection upon Lil than upon myself to be discovered cleaning up her

house for her during her absence. So that was that.

I began with the living-rooms, then tackled the bedrooms, and had just finished putting the fine touches on the guest-room when Buddy woke and demanded my attention. While he was eating his breakfast and chattering to me of his doings I began on the kitchen, but it was pretty well into the morning before I finished it and went back to clear up Lil's room and the bath-room.

I HAD barely finished when there came a scream from the play-yard where Buddy had retired after breakfast. I rushed to the rescue, to find him struggling to turn off the faucet, which he had confusedly turned in the wrong direction and had opened to the limit, drenching himself and setting his yard aswim.

"The ocean's tumming in. Fritzi, stop it twick!" he

gasped as I rushed to the rescue and turned it off. "Oh, Bud!—I told you not to touch it. You must ask Fritzi—"

"I did, an' you wouldn't tum."

It was like enough. I couldn't scold the child, so I took him in and dressed him again and put his suit in the tub for later reckoning. It was nearly noon when I finished, but I had to finish the bath-room, and I wanted to scrub the front porch tiles before I changed my clothes, even though I was nearly as wet as Buddy, and my face was smudged with mud.

[Turn to page 100]



G. E.
Salt Lake City, Utah.

MRS. MACCALL: "Did you ever see the like? Yon lassie makes me feel ashamed o' ma sex."

Mrs. MacCallum: "Wheest, woman, dinna be sae hard! She's likely just economically minded."

* * * * *
J. G.,
Hope, Ark.

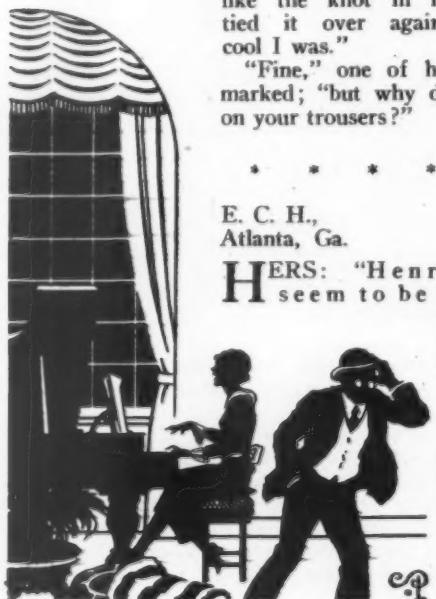
A SCHOOL teacher was very much annoyed by the continual mischievousness of one of her boys. At last she exclaimed in exasperation: "I wish I could be your mother for just about one week."

"Well, I will speak to my father about it," responded the youngster coolly.

* * * * *
G. F.,
Maywood, Calif.

A FEW minutes after the alarm was given in the hotel fire one of the guests joined a group of friends watching the spectacle and chided them for their excitement. "There was nothing to be excited about," he said. "When the alarm rang I jumped out of bed, lighted a cigarette, brushed my hair, and took my time about dressing. I didn't like the knot in my tie, so I tied it over again—that's how cool I was."

"Fine," one of his friends remarked; "but why didn't you put on your trousers?"



* * * * *
E. C. H.,
Atlanta, Ga.

HERS: "Henry, dear, you seem to be unusually fond of going to the movies alone lately. What is the reason?"

His: "Oh, it's such a relief to watch women open their mouths without having to listen to them."

M. W.,
Racine, Wis.

A SCOTCHMAN thought that a good way to save money for the Christmas expenses was to put a penny in a little savings bank every time he kissed his wife.

This he did for a whole year and when the holiday period came around, he opened the box and to his surprise out rolled not only pennies but coins of all denominations up to a pound sterling.

Sandy was amazed and expressed his astonishment to his wife, asking her how she accounted for it.

"Weel, Sandy," she replied, "it's no' ivery mon that's as stingy as you are."



* * * * *
W. R. A.,
Ireland, Texas.

WHAT'S the matter, honey? Did you hurt your self?"

"No, Mamma, I stung myself."

* * * * *
E. V.,
Ogden, Utah.

GET out of my way, feller," said the fresh city automobilist to the farmer, "before I run into you with my sixty-horse motor car."

"I hain't got no sixty-horse," returned the farmer, "but I got a .45 Colt right handy here, and let's see you get by it."

* * * * *
G. P.,
Salt Lake City.

THE storm burst upon us so suddenly and violently that we had no warning of the approach," said the tornado victim. "In an instant the house was demolished and scattered to the four winds. How I escaped being torn to pieces, I do not know. We—

"Good heavens!" said Mr. Meeke, jumping to his feet. "That reminds me! I—I almost forgot to mail a letter for my wife."

Stories

SMART SET Readers

D. J. F.,
Itasca, Texas.

CHIEF-OF-POLICE: "What! You mean to say this fellow choked a woman to death in a well-lighted cabaret in front of two hundred people? Didn't anybody interfere?"

Cop: "No, Cap; everybody thought they was dancing."



B. D. M.,
Spokane, Wash.

HIS Wife: "My dear man! You learned to drill in the army—why can't you pick this up? It's a perfectly simple step. Anyone would think you were mentally deficient."

Her Husband: "Almost the sergeant's own words, my dear."

L. E. J.,
Downs, Kansas.

WHEN Company B was training in the South during the early days of the war, their regular captain was transferred and supplanted by an officer who looked more like a schoolboy than a captain.

Company B thought they would have some fun with him. The next day when they went out to drill the captain called them to attention, and the following conversation took place:

Captain: "Company attention!"

A voice from the rear ranks: "And a little child shall lead them."

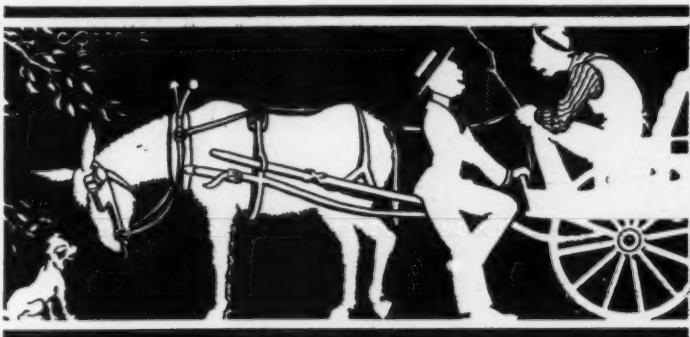
Captain: "The man who said that will take one pace forward."

Instantly the whole company stepped up.

Captain: "All right! Company dismissed!"

On the bulletin board that evening was written:

Company B, 177th Infantry, will take a 20-mile hike at 4 A. M. with full packs—AND A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM—ON A DARNED GOOD HORSE.



G. M.,
Sheffield, Ill.

MIDNIGHT: "You know, ever' time ah kiss mah gal she closes huh eyes an' smiles."

Jes-Befo'-Dawn: "Ah say she do."

M.: "Whut's dat, niggah?"

J. B. D.: "Ah say, do she?"

* * * * *

M. S. S.,
Olneyville, R. I.

THE soldier had been telling how he had killed a German in the War and was showing the gun that did the trick. A young lady said:

"Point the gun at me that I may know how that poor man felt."

Another soldier promptly stepped up and said:

"I also killed one, miss."

"And did you shoot him?"

"No, dear, I put my arms around him and squeezed him to death!"

* * * * *

B. C.,
Walkill, N. Y.

AT three o'clock in the morning a weary specimen of humanity reaches a phone and calls the garage for assistance.

"Hello! Is this the garage? I just turned turtle!"

"Yeah," came back a sleepy and disgusted voice, "but what you want is the zoo, not a garage."

* * * * *

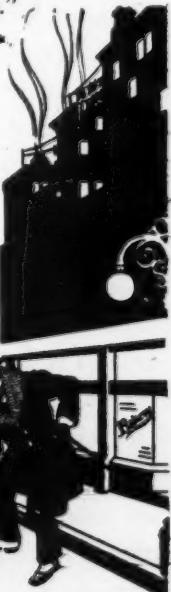
G. E.,
Salt Lake City.

MR. AND MRS. BEEBE were knocked down by a motor car. The car dashed away. A policeman arrived and found the couple bursting with indignation.

"Do you know the number of the car?" asked the policeman.

"Yes," replied the husband. "By a strange coincidence the first two numbers formed my age and the second two are the age of my wife."

"John," said the wife, "we will let the matter drop at once."



Another *SMART SET* Contest

Why I Lost My Hus- band



EVERYBODY has an extremely vital problem to solve. You don't always like to sit down and write it out, but it will help a lot if you do. How many girls have asked themselves the very question we want you to answer?

Of course I know this problem doesn't strike everyone. Next month we'll announce a new subject which will hit home to someone else.

You and I live in a very confusing world. We try as best we can to adapt ourselves to conditions—but sometimes it is like battering our heads against a stone wall. Just when everything looks bright a storm breaks and we don't know how to face it.

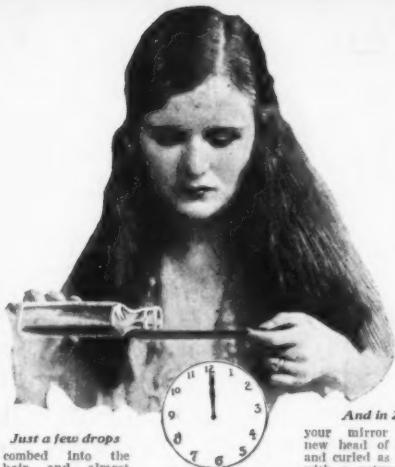
I believe it always helps to be able to discuss our troubles frankly. Sometimes even writing them down will show you the way to overcome the difficulty. And your letter, if it

is published, may help some other girl to overcome hers.

When I announced the title, "WHY I LOST MY HUSBAND," I didn't mean that you must have been divorced or separated from him. I simply have in mind that there always comes a time when he seems to be slipping away. Haven't you ever felt that way? What did you do? Let's talk it over.

WE WILL give \$100 for the best letter of not more than five hundred words on the subject, "Why I Lost My Husband," and \$50 each for the four next best letters. We will publish the winning letters just as we did those on PETTING. We will also review what the majority of the answers tell us.

The contest closes January 15, 1926. The editors will be the judges. Let's make this discussion a big success. —THE EDITOR



Just a few drops
combed into the
hair and almost
immediately you
can see "listless
locks" begin to
take on new life,
new lustre, new
silky sheen—
stray ends and
straggly strands
melding into glo-
rious waves and
curls.



And in 20 minutes

your mirror shows you a
new head of hair—marcelled
and curled as you like it best;
with a natural wave that no
artificial beauty-parlor
process could possibly duplicate.



Marvelous New Spanish Liquid

Makes any hair beautifully curly in 20 minutes

The Spanish Beggar's Priceless Gift

By Winifred Ralston

FROM the day we started to school, Charity Winthrop and I were called the touseled-hair twins.

Our mothers despaired of us. Our hair simply wouldn't behave.

As we grew older the hated name still clung to us. It followed us through the grades and into boarding school. Then Charity's family moved to Spain and I didn't see her again until last New Year's eve.

A party of us had gone to the Drake Hotel for dinner that night. As usual I was terribly embarrassed and ashamed of my hair.

Horribly self-conscious I was sitting at the table, scarcely touching my food, wishing I were home. It seemed that everyone had wonderful, lustrous, curly hair but me and I felt they were all laughing or, worse, pitying me behind my back.

My eyes strayed to the dance floor and there I saw a beautiful girl dancing with Tom Harvey. Her eye caught mine and to my surprise she smiled and started toward me.

About this girl's face was a halo of golden curls. I think she had the most beautiful hair I ever saw. My face must have turned scarlet as I compared it mentally with my own straggly, ugly mop.

Of course you have guessed her identity—Charity Winthrop who once had dull straight hair like mine.

It had been five long years since I had seen her. But I simply couldn't wait. I blurted out—"Charity Winthrop—tell me—what miracle has happened to your hair?"

She smiled and said mysteriously, "Come to my room and I will tell you the whole story."

*Charity tells of the
beggar's gift*

"Our house in Madrid faced a little, old plaza where I often strolled after my siesta. A Matchless Marcel

"Miguel, the beggar, always occupied the end bench of the south end of the plaza. I always dropped a few centavos in his hat when I passed and he soon grew to know me.

"The day before I left Madrid I stopped to bid him goodby and pressed a gold coin in his palm."

"Hija mia," he said, "You have been very kind to an old man. Digamelo (tell me) señorita, what it is your heart most desires."

"I laughed at the idea, then said jokingly, "Miguel, my hair is straight and dull. I would have it lustrous and curly."

"Oigame, señorita," he said—"Many years ago—a Castilian prince was wedded to a Moorish beauty. Her hair was black as a raven's wing and straight as an arrow. Like you, this lady wanted los pelos rizos (curly hair). Her husband offered thousands of pesos to the man who would fulfill her wish. The prize fell to Pedro, the Droguero. Out of roots and herbs he brewed a potion that converted the princess' straight, unruly hair into a glorious mass of ringlet curls."

"Pedro, son of the son of Pedro, has that secret today. Years ago I did him a great service. Here you will find him, go to him and tell your wish."

"I called a *coche* and gave the driver the address Miguel had given me.

At the door of the apothecary shop, a funny old hawk-nosed Spaniard met me. I stammered out my explanation. When I finished, he bowed and vanished into his store. Presently he returned and handed me a bottle.

"Terribly excited—I could hardly wait until I reached home. When I was in my room alone, I took down my hair and applied the liquid as directed. In twenty minutes, not one second more, the transformation, which you have noted, had taken place.

"Come, Winifred—apply it to your own hair and see what it can do for you."

Twenty minutes later, as I looked into Charity's mirror I could hardly believe my eyes. The impossible had happened. My dull straight hair had wound itself into curling tendrils. My head was a mass of ringlets and waves. It shone with a lustre it never had before.

You can imagine the amazement of the others in the party when I returned to the ballroom. Everybody noticed the change. Never did I have such a glorious night. I was popular. Men clustered about me. I had never been so happy.

The next morning when I awoke, I hardly dared look in my mirror fearing it had all been a dream. But it was true—gloriously true. My hair was curly and beautiful.

For a long time I kept the secret to myself, but I felt that all women should be given this remarkable beauty aid. So it has been made available through the *Century Chemists*. They have agreed to act as distributors under a most liberal trial offer, which makes this new found beauty secret available to all women, regardless of their financial status.

Now the golden opportunity is yours. You no longer have to spend large sums of money in beauty shops, or endanger your hair by some "permanent waves," for this remarkable Spanish Curling Fluid, called "Wave-Sta" will bring you beautifully curly hair in 20 minutes. One application will keep your hair beautiful a week or more.

Don't delay another minute. Take advantage of this liberal trial offer **NOW** and always have the beautiful curly hair you want.

Liberal Trial Offer

(Only One Bottle to a Family)

For a limited time, we are offering a full size bottle of "Wave-Sta" (Spanish Curling Fluid) at a price that covers only the cost of compounding, advertising, and selling, which we figured down to \$1.97. (Please remember that this is a special offer for new users only and we cannot fill more than one order for each family at this price.) If you are not perfectly delighted with results after using "Wave-Sta" for 5 days, simply return the unused portion and your money will be refunded. Under the terms of special trial offer you do not need to send any money. Simply sign and mail the coupon. Then when the postman brings this remarkable beauty aid, just pay him \$1.97, plus a few cents postage, and your hair worries are ended forever.

This offer may not be repeated. Remember, we take all the risk. If "Wave-Sta" doesn't make your hair beautifully curly, give it new life, new lustre, new silky sheen, and you have to do is notify us and your money will be returned in full. Have you ever heard of a fairer offer?

CENTURY CHEMISTS

Jackson Blvd., at Desplaines St., Chicago, Ill.
Send no money—simply sign and mail the coupon.

Coupon

CENTURY CHEMISTS

Jackson Blvd., at Desplaines St., Dept. 142,
Chicago, Ill.

Gentlemen: Please send me, in plain wrapper, by insured parcel post, a full sized bottle of "Wave-Sta" (Spanish Curling Fluid). I will pay postman the special trial price of \$1.97, plus few cents postage, on delivery. I understand that if after a 5-day trial I am not perfectly delighted with this magic curling liquid, I may return the unused contents in the bottle and you will immediately return my money in full.

Name
Address
Note: If you are apt to be out when the postman calls, you may enclose \$2 and "Wave-Sta" will be sent to you postpaid.



Lovely Curls



Promoted Over 35 Candidates

Accountancy Brings 200% Raise

6 MONTHS 12 MONTHS 18 MONTHS 24 MONTHS

"When I enrolled in LaSalle training in Higher Accountancy," writes J. L. Trudell, a Michigan man, "I was doing the simplest kind of clerical work. I had had no previous bookkeeping experience. Before completing half the course—within a period of about eight months—three promotions brought me to be Assistant to the Chief Accountant. Within another year I was given entire charge of accounting, over about thirty-five assistants. The first of the year I was promoted to be Director of Advertising with present earnings nearly 200% more than when I first enrolled. I am very grateful for LaSalle training."

Send for Salary-Doubling Plan

Are you like Trudell—following a well-organized plan to double—triple—quadruple your salary? Or are you relying for advancement upon day-to-day experience? LaSalle offers a sound and practical **salary-doubling plan** which has added millions and millions of dollars to the earning power of its members. If a successful career is worth a 2-cent stamp and two minutes of your time, check the field of advancement that appeals to you, fill in your name and address, and place the coupon in the mail TODAY.

LA SALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY

The World's Largest Business Training Institution

Dept. 150-HR

Chicago

I would welcome details of your **salary-doubling plan**, together with copy of "Accountancy, the Profession that Pays," also a copy of "Ten Years' Promotion in One," all without obligation.

Higher Accountancy

Training for positions as Auditor, Comptroller, Certified Public Accountant, Cost Accountant, etc.

Other LaSalle Opportunities

LaSalle opens the way to success in every important field of business. If more interested in one of the fields indicated below, check here:

<input type="checkbox"/> Business Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Modern Business Correspondence and Practice
<input type="checkbox"/> Modern Salesmanship	<input type="checkbox"/> Modern Foremanship and Production Methods
<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Personnel and Employment Management
<input type="checkbox"/> Railway Station Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Expert Bookkeeping
<input type="checkbox"/> Law—Degree of LL.B.	<input type="checkbox"/> Business English
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Law	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Spanish
<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Management Efficiency	<input type="checkbox"/> Effective Speaking
<input type="checkbox"/> Banking and Finance	<input type="checkbox"/> C. P. A. Coaching

Name _____

Present Position _____

Address _____

DIMPLES

It is amazing what a difference dimples make. Women appear ten years younger. Men acquire a distinctive charm. Men are fascinated by their mischievous beauty. Yet dimples may be yours now, for the DOLLY-DIMPLER is a simple, harmless device that quickly produces dimples. Invented by a woman. Patent applied for—nothing else like it. Used by beauty specialists and movie actresses. Easily used at home. Results positive. Complete outfit, including instructions for use, sterilized in plain wrapper, for only \$1.00 or one \$1.00 O. B. for \$1.50. Sold only by DOLLY DIMPLER CO., 270 McDaniel St., Dayton, Ohio.

Our

Cover Girl

and the

Latest \$1,000 Award

CHICAGO has given us our cover girl this month. She is Ruth Schwabauer, and her picture tells us just why she has been popular. Beauty is not her only asset, however. She graduated from the Waller High School at the age of fifteen, which is quite remarkable in itself as an indication of scholarship.

Her first position was that of a stenographer for the F. E. Compton Company, publishers of encyclopedias. Later she worked for another business house and is now secretary to the president of a commercial company.

When Ruth was twelve years of age her parents moved to DesPlaines, a suburb of Chicago, where they still live. Most of her life has been spent in the wholesome surroundings of the open air, and that, next to the movies, is what she likes best.

Now she has been chosen as the December SMART SET Cover Girl, and awarded the prize of \$1,000. The original portrait has been presented to her.

Four other girls were chosen by the judges as winners of the CHICAGO AMERICAN-SMART SET contest. Their pictures appear on pages 53-56.

We are proud of all these girls and glad to have them represent us as our typical American beauties. It has been a pleasure for me to be able to help them find their way before the public. One of them has already gone to Hollywood at the request of a producer who saw her picture.

And we are just as glad to be able to say to you, "Folks, I want you to meet Ruth, Addie, Byrd, Marion, and Jean. They're our girls. Let's watch them prove that we were justified in our choice."

I wish we could have given them each a thousand dollars, but I know they are good sports—the same as thousands of other applicants who did not win.

It's been a strenuous job picking the winners from among so many worthy pictures, but now we are going to try something else. See the announcements of the story contests on pages 29 and 72.

My Left Hip Pocket

[Continued from page 65]

myself. Was this girl sincere, or a clever actress?

"Hurry! Please help me, Señor. He will find me."

She pulled at my arm with slim, light fingers. Her voice was pleading, a musical voice, unnerved now and shaking. In the half obscurity of the night I could see her complexion but dimly. It was fair, I could tell. Even in the darkness it seemed pink and soft. Yes, she must be very pretty.

"Or, Señor! Why do you wait?" she cried, pulling me with all her little strength. "Do not leave me. You are an American. You are strong. Help me—only this little bit." Her face, I saw, was under mine, looking up with what must have been, judging from her voice, the most pleading eyes in the world.

"Why certainly! By all means!" I said suddenly, putting an arm about her shoulders and starting forward. I felt my manhood speak. What was I strong for, if not for just such situations as these? And now a weak maiden had run to me for protection—to me. She begged the strength of my arms. She nearly wept with fear that I would abandon her to an oppressor. By the gods, I *would* protect her!

On the opposite side of the street, in the dark shadow of a wall, we walked along without speaking. The girl was quiet now. She seemed infinitely relieved, and walked very close to me, as a child walks close to its father in the dark. Now and then I felt a little trembling in her body.

"Do not be afraid," I said.

She walked with hurried steps, continuing to tremble.

I AM afraid that—that he will find us before we reach the house. He has an automobile."

We walked, quickly, for fifteen full minutes. Around one corner we went, and around another. For my part, I was soon completely lost. Somehow, it seemed we often doubled back into the direction from which we had come. We had begun, I knew, going south, away from the river, toward the interior; then we had turned to the right, soon again to the left, and now we were in a twisting alley. Out of the alley again—was this south?—onward, around another corner—or was this south?—down a broad street—through a plaza—into a side street, where we went for several minutes—what direction was this?—on and on we hurried. But whenever I mentioned the directions, she was always confidently reassuring. She seemed to have no uneasiness in this matter, and I soon reconciled myself to follow where she lead. She must know where she was going.

She did.

"We are nearly there," she finally told me. She shot a glance back of us.

"Do not be afraid."

"I hope he does not find us. We have only a little farther to go."

"We will get there in time," I said hopefully, quickening the pace. "You say we are nearly there?" How many—how many men are there in this automobile?"

"He is alone."

"Well, is he—how big is the man?" I asked, beginning to grow angry within myself at continuing so long to flee from one lone man.

"Big? He is not big. But I am afraid of him."

She had no sooner said this than we were startled by the bright lights of an automobile which turned into the street three or more blocks behind us.

I looked back. The car seemed to be coming fast.



Yes, this Rouge is flattering—

AND SO, SHE GREETES THE WORLD WITH A SMILE,
CONFIDENT, SERENE, ADORABLE!

THE lovely glow of PRINCESS PAT Rouge appears to lie below the skin, not on it. Apply it to your own cheeks and see for yourself what a fine, youthful blush it brings. Then you'll agree. "Yes, indeed, this Rouge is flattering."

Smart, new, modish! And one application lasts all evening. It is not affected by perspiration or moisture.

To-day the best looking woman knows how to use PRINCESS PAT Rouge. With her its use is an art. On the dressing table of this clever woman you will find two or three tints of "Princess Pat." She blooms in Princess Pat Rouge *VIVID* when she wears that gorgeous party gown and a bright flush is appropriate. Princess Pat *Medium* Rouge is her choice when a soft pastel shade suits her mood and her gown. And when a natural orange tint is just the right shade, she rejoices in Princess Pat *English Tint*, which won such instant favor with stylish women everywhere.



Then, confident, sparkling, always in poise, she graces every company, expressing in person and attire the last word in correct color harmony.

You can enjoy the same advantage. Princess Pat Rouge is sold at every department or drug store. Should your dealer be temporarily out, we will gladly send you a week's supply, free, on request.

We want you to prove to your own satisfaction how this unique rouge brings out your Beauty as no rouge ever did before.



Princess Pat Lipstick

As a final touch to your beauty it is essential that the color harmony between lips and cheeks should be exact. With English Tint or Medium Rouge use Princess Pat "Natural" Lipstick; with Vivid Rouge use Princess Pat "Vivid" Lipstick. Keeps the lips soft and pliant—prevents dryness or chap.

Princess Pat

PRINCESS PAT LTD., Chicago, U. S. A.
Canadian Address: 107 Duke St., Toronto, Ont.

Free Mail this coupon for a liberal sample of Princess Pat Rouge.

PRINCESS PAT, LTD., Dept. 1301
2709 So. Wells St., Chicago, Ill.

(In Canada address: 107 Duke St., Toronto, Ont.)

Please send me, free of cost, a sample of Princess Pat Rouge, as checked.

Vivid Medium English Tint

(Print Name).....

Address.....



BLONDES

Light Hair Requires
Special Shampoo to
Keep It Golden

TO keep blonde hair from darkening, fading and losing its attractiveness, it is always necessary to wash it with particular care. The kind of shampoo suitable for dark or auburn hair may quickly ruin the charm of golden hair. Blondex, the new shampoo for blondes only, preserves the natural golden beauty of light hair. Brightens the dullest, most faded blonde hair and keeps it from turning dark or streaked. You'll be amazed and delighted with the results of even the first shampoo! Blondex makes the hair fluffy, soft and lustrous. Not a dye. Beneficial to the scalp and hair. Over half a million users. Nothing better for children's hair. Money back instantly if you are not delighted. Get Blondex at any good drug or department store.

BLONDEX

The Blonde Hair Shampoo



Have Beautiful, Curled Eye Lashes

Your eyes will look larger and more attractive. Lashes with a beautiful, natural upward curve make bright eyes sparkle with greater brilliancy—soft eyes appear softer.

\$1 KURLASH \$1
(Not a Cosmetic)

Curls lashes WITHOUT heat or cosmetics. Nothing to put ON or INTO your eyes. Simply apply gentle pressure an instant and you have a beautiful curl that lasts one to three days. Nothing extra to buy or replace. \$1 postpaid or you can pay postman \$1 plus postage. Money back guarantee. Beauty information free. THE STICKEL CO., 133 N. Clinton Building, ROCHESTER, N. Y.

Be a Trained DENTAL NURSE

Women! Girls! Earn \$30 to \$65 a Week!

Ideal profession for women of all ages. Trained Dental Nurses earn \$30 to \$65 a week. Work in Dentists' offices, hospitals and Laboratories. Easy, pleasant work with short office hours.

Learn at Home!

I will train you at home during spare time so you can qualify in a few months for a steady position at BIG PAY. Everything made so simple and clear you cannot fail.

Big Demand!

Hundreds of splendid positions now open for trained Dental assistants in every locality. Free Employment Service helps place graduates in this new, uncrowded field.

Get My Book—It's FREE!
Let me tell you all about the fascinating work of the Dental Nurse. Get my Free Scholarships offer and the plans which assure your success. Don't fail to get your copy today—it's free!

McCARIE SCHOOL, 1336 S. Michigan Ave., Dept. 83 Y, Chicago, Ill.

"Come!" uttered the girl in a terrified whisper. "Across the street. Into that park."

We crossed. Hurriedly we got behind some foliage, and waited.

It was a big, open expanse of a park, with date palms along the sidewalk and behind these, a continuous line of some sort of tall flowering plant. It was behind this that we stood. There were no lights in the park. I was thankful for this. And also, there was no moon,—only the billion stars. Everything was black darkness there in that park, and I was certain that no one could possibly discover us.

The automobile came closer, more slowly now.

"Oh! but I am afraid," said the girl. She was shaking. Her two hands held my arm in a frantic little grip.

"Just keep still."

"He—I am afraid he saw us."

"Quiet."

The car came closer, seemed to be nearing the curb of the sidewalk, seemed to be slowing down.

I set my jaw. I determined that if this fellow laid one finger on the girl, there was going to be a fight.

The car was nearly abreast of us, when suddenly it whirled toward the curb, flooded our place with light, and stopped.

The girl was speechless.

So, we were found. Let the man come. What did he think he was going to do?—throw a helpless girl into his car and drive off? Well, there was a surprise awaiting him.

The man got out of the car. I stepped out onto the sidewalk. He reached inside and switched off the lights.

In the darkness we stood, I and the girl, she behind me, holding feebly to my arms.

The man stepped onto the sidewalk. He was short. He seemed young,—though in the darkness his face was invisible.

"What do you want?" I asked.

He said nothing. He stood before me, perfectly still.

Then the surprise! My arms were jerked backwards. A knee kicked into my back. I staggered, would have fallen upon my back, but was held in a vise-grip by—I looked up—the girl!

The man was upon me immediately. He straddled my body, covering my face with a heavy rag and binding it tightly. My legs were tied. My hands were shackled behind me with my own necktie. I struggled, of course, but to no avail. These two seemed practiced team-mates.

"In his back pocket—left hand!" said the girl's voice.

A hand took the roll of money—twelve hundred dollars—from my left hip pocket.

In another moment I heard them roar away in the automobile.

* * * * *

Lying there among the violets, tied hand and foot, blindfolded, my mouth bound shut, I began to recover from my surprise.



Did you ever face a situation like the above—feel that you should speak to a stranger in distress, and yet you were not sure that it would be the right move?

And then if you did speak to the person, what was the outcome of it? You might follow this up and write a prize-winning story.

The announcement on page 29 gives you the possibilities in this story contest.

On page 78 I am giving you a story in which the situation is so similar and yet so different from the above that I know you will like it.—THE EDITOR.

After a few tugs, I freed myself, picked up my hat, and sat down on one of the park benches to meditate. Again and again, at intervals, I recall, I told myself that I would be "damned," and other things to that effect.

But there was no good in meditating. The money was gone—taken by two that were in some way connected with Madama Pancha's place.

Connection or no connection, the money was gone. And I began to walk. At first I was absorbed with getting my bearings in those dark streets; but later, when I had learned the directions and was well on my way toward the "open-all-night" locality, from where I had been lured just a half hour before, my mind began to boil with black thoughts of vengeance.

In six or eight minutes I had reached the lighted streets and saloons; and thundering around a corner, whom did I meet—but Jerry!

So excited that I could hardly speak, I told him everything. Of course, happy-go-lucky scout that he is, he laughed and laughed, saying he couldn't help it. "Why, Shorty! That girl is old lady Pancha's daughter! Say, she's the cork's pop, ain't she? Did you make a date? . . . But that was too bad."

"Twelve hundred dollars' worth," said I. "Yep. . . . And the worst is, you can't get it back: she stole it from you, but you had won it from her—gambling; and all the police in Mexico can't do you any good. It'd be different if gambling wasn't against the law on the border."

YES. That's very true. I can't get my money back. But, my man, the police can close up that place!"

"That's right!"

"Yes, and they will! I'll go and give the authorities a tip, and in fifteen minutes Miss Madama Pancha and her smart daughter will be behind the bars!"

"Do it, Shorty!"

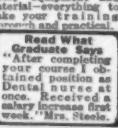
And at once we started at a fast walk toward the station of the *autoridades*.

But, as I said at the beginning, we never arrived. I was angry, yes; and it is true I had vowed to see Madama and her daughter suffer. Their place was to be closed. But as I walked, my anger cooled; and continuing to walk, I got wisdom. Closed, Madama's place was of no profit to me; but open—ah!—a gathering place of the élite, the one gambling hall where all the men were moneyed men, and I (of course I never tell it)—I, a veteran with the deck! Most certainly I wanted Madama's place left open. Would I close my own newly-found gold mine?

"No," I said, suddenly turning back, "we will not go to the *autoridades*."

On the way back to the bridge, I explained to Jerry, and he agreed with me.

"But next time, Shorty, don't you be so gallant. Which would you rather be—a hero or have twelve hundred dollars? . . . Well, then: next time, you come right home."



McCARIE SCHOOL, 1336 S. Michigan Ave., Dept. 83 Y, Chicago, Ill.

How I Earn Money at Home

And In This Way Make Up For George's Shrinking Salary

Every Wife or Self-Supporting Girl Can Use Extra Money. Many Are Now Making It Themselves—Right at Home—How Auto Knitting Pays Three Ways

By MARY WHITMAN

MY dear, you should have seen her at church this morning. She looked positively 'dowdy.' It's a shame! Mary used to be such a well dressed girl—until she married that bank clerk. I should think he'd feel—"

"Sh-h-h! She's on this car. Over behind you. She might hear."

But I had heard—and my face flushed red with resentment and shame. It was true—I did look "dowdy"—and I knew it.

I got off the street car at the next corner and walked the remaining blocks to my home—and George. My cup of bitterness had spilled over, and I needed a few minutes to choke back my tears that wanted to run down my burning cheeks.

I didn't want to make George feel worse than he did already about our money situation. My husband is one of the "white collar men" whose salaries haven't kept pace with the mounting cost of living. I had sometimes hinted to George that I would be glad to take my old position again, but he had always vetoed the idea strenuously.

But the bitter experience of this Sunday morning was too much. I resolved as I walked home I was going to find a way to make extra money for clothes.

When I got home I was prepared to be cheerful as usual, but George was comfortably smoking and absorbed in his Sunday paper, and his contentment somehow irritated me terribly. To make matters worse he held up the magazine-picture section of the paper as I came into the room, and remarked that he had never seen the girls wear "such good-looking duds as they do this year."

I lost my temper, snatched the paper from him and cried, "If you like to see nice clothes so much, why don't you buy your wife some of them?"

Then I rushed to my room, still carrying the magazine section of the paper, shut the door, and threw myself across the bed for a good cry. George came and knocked and spoke to me, but I wouldn't let him in.

After a while I sat up, and idly began to turn the pages of the paper I had taken away from George. All of a sudden I sat up straighter and gasped. A woman was looking out of the page at me, holding a bank check in her hand, and across the top of the page were the words, "How I Make Money—Right at Home—Auto Knitting Pays Three Ways."

That night I mailed the coupon from that advertisement of The Auto Knitter Hosiery Company.

To make my story short, I found their prospectus so convincing and reasonable that I sent for and received the wonderful little machine, the Auto Knitter.



"It helped us over the hard spots by turning spare hours into extra dollars"

While George was at the bank, I used it every minute I could spare from my house-work. At the end of a month I sent my first shipment of soft, warm, well-knit wool socks to the company's hosiery department. By return mail came a check in payment.

Well, I kept on knitting socks—but after a little while not many of them went to the company, for when I let my friend Gracia into my secret and showed her the socks, she immediately exclaimed: "I know where we can sell them right here in town and nobody need even know who made them!" It worked out fine. I sold them and soon had calls for more. I found I could make more money selling them in this way than I could sending my standard socks to the company.

Then one day, as we were ready to go out, I presented myself before George in a pretty, new accordion-pleated frock which I had seen advertised in Park & Taylor's sale and a fancy little sweater I had made up myself with the aid of the Auto Knitter.

His mouth opened wide and he just stared at me in admiration. Finally, he managed to say: "Where did you get them, Mary?"

"I earned them myself," I replied brightly, not just sure how he would take the news.

"The sweater, too?" he inquired, and I knew he was thinking what an extravagant lot such a sweater must have cost.

"Well, the sweater—" I answered, "the sweater I really made myself!"

"But, Mary, I didn't know you could knit like that!"

"I couldn't by hand, George," I replied, "but I learned to do it another way."

George looked for a moment as if I had said I had stolen my new things. But then I made him sit down and listen to my story.

Then I took the light, portable Auto Knitter out of the closet and showed George

how it worked. I had had enough practice by that time, so that I made a sock so quickly that George's eyes almost dropped out of his head.

"And you say the Company's hosiery department will buy the socks from you?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied, "they will take my entire surplus of standard socks at a guaranteed price, but the best of it is that I can sell my work right here at home and make even more than by sending it to the company, to say nothing of the money I can save by making our own knitted wear just as I made this sweater."

George was certainly astonished, said he had no objection to my continuing the work. In fact, he was secretly proud

of my ability. So I kept right on making clever little knitted articles for my daughter, socks for George and knitted novelties for home sale. When spring and summer came I took up the knitting of fancy, sport and golf stockings, so that I really had very little knitting to sell to the company, although they helped me in every way, even sending me a booklet telling how to build up my own home knitting business.

Now, I can have the pretty things I want for myself, for Helen and for the house—and I don't have to feel "guilty" when I buy them, because I am not obliged to touch a cent of what I call "the family money"—the money that George makes.

Whenever I hear a woman complaining about the high cost of living and clothes, I always try to tell her how the Auto Knitter will help her to make and save money at home in spare time.

No matter where you live, I feel sure that you want to know all about the Auto Knitter that has meant so much to us. By all means write to The Auto Knitter Hosiery Company at once and find out about this home industry waiting for you. Find out what others have done with the aid of the Auto Knitter and what it offers you. Send your name and address on the coupon below—no obligation of any sort. The Auto Knitter Hosiery Company, Inc., Dept. 2151, 630 Genesee Street, Buffalo, N. Y.

The Auto Knitter Hosiery Co., Inc.
Dept. 2151, 630 Genesee St., Buffalo, N. Y.

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AGENTS WANTED



The Fellow She Thought I Was

Was It Her Little Game, After All?

COME to think of it, I don't wonder now why I did it. There really wasn't anything else to do. It was on one of those cold nights for which Chicago is noted. I had started home and was waiting for a street-car on one of the busy corners of the Loop. Traffic was creeping along; cars were late; people elbowed their way through the crowds, anxious to get out of the biting cold.

Working my way out of this midnight mob, I stepped aside, near the entrance to a store, to wait for my car. I had been there for some time before I realized that close to me stood a girl, her face hidden in the fur collar of her coat. Her head was turned from me, but in a moment I caught a sound that made me forget all about my car and the bitter cold. She was sobbing. I listened more closely. Sure enough, I was not mistaken. The girl was sobbing.

Should I speak to her? One is used to all kinds of sights and hold-ups in the city, but there was something unusual about this one.

"Isn't that my car? Yes, and why do I allow myself to let such a common—well, why don't others... women... see what can be done?" A thousand and one thoughts passed quickly through my mind. I let my car go by; I stood another moment, trying to decide the best thing to do. But what harm could there be in asking what the trouble was. I was "wise"; I knew how far to go.

"What's the trouble, miss?" I finally asked, rather uncertainly.

She glanced up, the tears bright on her lashes. Then she looked at me squarely. What she saw must have won her confidence, for she put her hand on my arm and almost whispered:

"Could you—would you do something for me? I am cold—suffering so—and haven't had a bite to eat since yesterday. Would you get me something to eat and a place to stay—and let any explanation of my being here come later?"

Well, if this wasn't the real thing, she certainly had a new attack. I was puzzled, to say the least. Here was a good-looking, well-dressed young woman asking me for help! Then again came the thought that I was being taken for a sucker—that it was the same old story, only under a different garb.

Another look at her pretty face, and—well, I would take a chance any time on that face.

Then I ran into another difficulty. I had just a little more than a dollar in my pocket. That settled it. I couldn't help her very much. I was about ready to explain this to her when another glance brought about a better plan: I would take the girl home with me. If I was being stung, I would be stung at home, and nobody would know it.

"All right," I said. "Come along with me and I will do all I can for you." Then when I slipped my hand under her arm she shrank from me for a moment, a look

nothing short of terror coming to her eyes.

A taxi-driver soon answered my call, and in second we were on our way.

My apartment was a small affair—one room, with indoor bed, and kitchenette and bath adjoining.

"Now, get warm and make yourself comfortable while I go out and get something to eat," I told her, and rushed down to the delicatessen on the corner for some prepared food.

When I returned she was sound asleep in my big chair, which she had drawn up to the radiator. I moved about as quietly as possible, making coffee on the electric plate, and trying to get together enough supper on the gate-legged table to pull her through until morning.

There was something that made me stop and gaze at her for a long time before I aroused her—the drawn, white, little face; the thick, bronze hair; the quaint curl of her lips; and, more pronounced than all, the sort of resigned expression about her face. Skeptical as ever, I was deeply touched. And then when I started to call her, there was the sudden realization that I didn't know what to call her. I touched her on the shoulder and she sprang up with a cry that I thought would arouse the suspicions of the apartment neighbors. Then she remembered where she was, smiled, and said, very softly:

"Oh, I'm sorry I dropped off to sleep. I'm a poor guest, I'm afraid."

She was honestly hungry—another fact that bolstered up my hope of her sincerity. She finished to the last fragment the food that I prepared for her, uttering only a few broken words now and then, but it was easy to see that she was evading the promise she had made—that she would explain later just who she was. She knew that I expected it now.

I WATCHED her silently as she seated herself near the table and I settled down for a smoke. My offer of a cigarette was very politely declined. She sat for a few minutes nervously twisting her handkerchief in her hands. I knew that she was going to say something, or, should this be a hold-up of some kind, that something was going to happen shortly. Anyway, I decided to let her make the first move.

"I know I owe you an explanation," she began. In the moment of pause that followed, I wanted to tell her that I wanted no explanation; that I understood. But her desire to clear the situation was evident. She must speak.

"I came to Chicago about six months ago. I had always lived with an aunt in a little town. After finishing high school, I went to a business college in a small city not so very far from home. Fortunately that I took this course, too; my aunt's death just before I finished the term left me—well, left me nothing."

"An acquaintance of Aunt Edith lived here in Chicago, and it was with the hope

that I would stand a better chance to get a job that I came here.

"Everything went well—I was feeling quite settled and had a good start in my work—until Auntie's friend found it necessary to go to the mountains for the winter on account of her health. Before going away, though, she helped me get a very nice room in a beautiful section of the city. Too, she was largely responsible for my success in getting a job in a large advertising agency, my work being that of ledger clerk in the billing department."

Of course that isn't the exact wording, but she had said enough by this time to make me know that she was either straightforwardly real or one of the best actors I ever saw. If she were the latter, there had been no end to the rehearsing on that speech she was giving.

"Part of my responsibility was to take the bills to the superintendent's office after I had posted them in the ledger. Mr. Graves, the superintendent, always spoke very pleasantly to me, and passed a few genial remarks every time I went to his office.

"One afternoon he asked me to go out to a show and have dinner with him. I hardly knew how to refuse, he had been so pleasant. And then, I didn't want to do anything to upset his jovial nature. I expected to have an enjoyable evening, and wasn't disappointed in the least. He was gentlemanly in every way you can imagine.

"The many times that I went out with him after that only made me admire Mr. Graves all the more. It meant everything to me, after my friend went away, and I began to look forward to my evenings with him.

"It was near the first of the month—our busiest time—when he sent for me and asked if I would mind helping him in the office that evening. Besides the regular business, he had a few personal odds and ends to straighten out.

"Together we made out his income tax returns, and then I typed several personal letters for him. It did not occur to me until afterwards that it was strange that he had not given this work to his own stenographer. I took the letters to his desk and was laying them before him when he took my hand in his and kissed it before I knew what it was about. I must have looked very strange, for he rose and tried to put his arms around me.

WHAT'S the matter, little sweet-heart?" he began.

"I pushed him away, too rattled to say a word, ran to the locker for my hat and coat, and started for the door. Then he stood in front of me and again put his arms around me. Now I was more than angry, and told him that I was going home. Again he laughed and tried to kiss me, and I struggled to get away. All of a sudden he seemed coarse and ugly looking. I was frightened. His face was close to mine—too close. I reached up and slapped him across the cheek. That made him change his tune to anger.

"So—this is the way you treat a man who takes you out and spends money on you?" he hissed.

"Around and around that box of an office we went, until I broke loose and ran around behind the stenographer's desk. I was breathing so loudly that I might have been heard a block away. My hair was a tangled mass, some of it sticking almost straight up. He made a quick jump, caught me, and pulled me from around the desk. I grabbed for something to hang on to. Desperately, I clung to the edge of the desk, but soon found my grip weakening there. Then as my hand slipped over the desk it touched the ink-well. A weapon!

"Without further thought I raised the

"With All My Love"—Bob

Two Whole Years She Had Waited for His Letter

By Daphne Davis

AGERLY Peggy tore the envelope open. After two years of futilely trying to forget Bob's bold, free hand-writing which once so thrilled her, still held the power to send blushes to her cheeks and cause her temples to throb wildly.

Handsome Bob Warren was Peggy's ideal. Two years before, Peggy had held his attention just long enough to lose her heart—and then, when it hurt most—he drifted away. Vainly she waited and hoped while Bob became more and more popular—truly the "Man of the hour."

Her friends secretly pitied her apparent loneliness—and then came the amazing change in "Plain Peg."

In just the last few months, what a different Peggy—everywhere the "life of the party"—radiant, laughing, dazzling, confident Peggy! From that obscure slip of a wall-flower, suddenly emerged this beautiful, popular, and apparently the most expensively gowned girl in town. Everyone knew she had but little money—yet for every occasion a new dazzling dress or coquettish hat that simply glorified hidden charms, she herself never suspected she had. Everywhere men sought her company—

But even amid all this delightful glamour, Peggy's eyes would frequently drift pensively, thoughtfully away—just a beautiful reverie of other days and a secret longing for someone—the one she admired more than anyone else.

And then this letter:

"Dearest Peg," she read.

"I saw you yesterday though you didn't see me.

"Peg, I've been a fool!

"I want more than anything else on earth to see you again. Tonight, at 8, Peg—May I _____"

"With all my love,
"BOB."

The true Heaven of Peggy's Paradise was her's once again—everywhere at Clubs, Theatres, Formal Dinners, Football Games and the like, wonderful Peggy and handsome Bob were the old inseparable Pals, and just a few months later her engagement to Bob was announced.

It was one night while preparing her trousseau—she confided to her very best girl chum, her suddenly acquired Secret of Charm—the Secret that controls the happiness of most EVERY WOMAN.

It is the Secret that daily brings back lost Sweethearts to hundreds of women. It is the Secret that holds them. It is the Secret that brings to woman the Ideal Romance of her Dreams—It is the Secret that helps any woman in helping her husband—at the same time increasing his admiration and love.

This Secret, Peggy told her chum, is the exact knowledge of creating, designing and making Distinctive, Fashionable, Personally, adapted Dress, which multiplies all of a woman's natural Charm and Beauty.

But this knowledge of feminine charm is not inborn—it is not just a natural trait—indeed not so—it is an accomplishment that only can be attained through proper study.

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possible for thousands of Peggy's, the world over. And, dear reader, Veva Giffin Moody, probably the world's most famous Teacher of Fashionable Dress, has a wonderful message for you.



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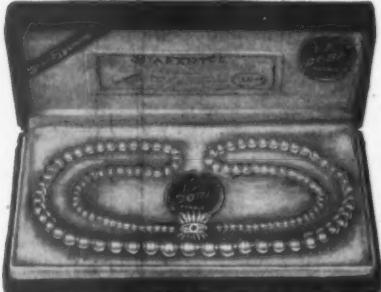
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ink-well with the one purpose of letting him see how it felt on the side of his head, but somehow my nerve gave way and I only besmirched his face and clothes with the contents. It's funny now to think how he looked, but I couldn't see anything funny about him then. He let out an oath, said something about getting even . . . I would pay and pay dearly . . . wondered what I thought he meant when he spent so much time and money on me. And all the time he was shooting this volley of words at me I was getting my hat and coat from the locker, and I left him standing near the table as I ran down the stairs and out onto the street.

"That was the last time I ever saw him, and I shall always think of him in terms of how he looked when I left him there—all splotched up with ink. The only spots on his face that were not black seemed ready to burst into a flame. And he didn't dare follow me out of the office where he might be a sight for others.

"I didn't mention the happening to anyone that night. What was the use? There was nothing to do but look for another job, and early on the next morning I started out.

"The few places that I found as possibilities, and at which I made personal application, they were very particular about my references. I had none. They almost laughed when I mentioned my original recommendation from the business college. They all wanted to know where I had been working and why I was looking for a new job. I finally told my experience to two—a man and a woman—and they laughed at me. I was afraid to tell anyone else.

"The little bit of money I had saved did not last long. I managed to pay my rent until last week, and it was due again today. Yesterday my last cent was spent on a bite to eat, and when you found me tonight I was desperate. I hadn't car fare, and besides, I couldn't go back and tell the landlady that I hadn't found a position. I did the one thing that I had always resolved never to do—ask for help. And I wouldn't have asked just anybody for a lift, either. You seemed to understand from the very first.

"Now, that's my story. What are you going to do with me?"

"I'll tell you exactly what I'm going to do with you. I'm going to take you down to a friend's office next Monday and he will put you to work—"

"But—"

"And in the meantime we will have to make out the best way we can," I finished.

Not thinking what I was doing, I got up, rammed my cigarette stub into the bottom of an ashtray, and soon found myself being supported by the arm of her chair as I leaned over and looked her straight in the eye.

IF THIS is a frame-up," I told her, "I want to congratulate you in knowing the business, but I don't believe it is, and I'm going to act accordingly. I can't take you to a hotel tonight. It is very late, and you have no baggage."

And then I stopped and gazed at her for a moment. Her story had been straight from the shoulder; sincerity seemed to be the keynote. Now she sat huddled in the corner of the big chair, hands trembling in her lap, and big tears running down her cheeks onto her dress. I took one of the little hands in mine. She looked up and tried to smile, but it was a pitiful effort. The smile froze on her lips, and she pulled her hand from mine, only to replace it after a moment.

I sat there for some time before it dawned upon me that her agitation was caused by her misunderstanding my attitude toward the whole situation—my mo-

tive in taking her in. She trembled like a leaf. I could feel the quivering of her little body. She looked up again, through large and rather wild-looking eyes. I knew she wanted to say something—something she felt that she had to say. And then, her lips hardly moving, she whispered:

"You have been very good to me—I couldn't have asked for more—and I will do just what you think—wish—"

I dropped her hand and jumped to my feet. For a moment I was hurt—hurt because she had taken my kindness as a bargain of some sort. "So, that's the kind of a fellow she thinks I am, eh?" I thought.

Now I grabbed her by the hand and jerked her to a standing position, scaring her for the moment. I put my hand under her chin and pierced her deep, brown eyes.

LE T me tell you something, little girl. You are as free here as you would be in your own home. I am not a cad," I told her very heatedly. "It's too bad that you misunderstood."

A little cry of joy, a sudden raising of her hands into mine, and:

"You are a real—you are—" She either couldn't finish what she started to say, or she didn't know what she wanted to say. Instead, she expressed her emotion in a smile that I had never seen, and the trembling ceased. A sort of transformation was taking place right under my eyes. She was changed into a very beautiful and happy girl. And in this changing, all doubts and fears on my part vanished.

"How can I ever repay—thank you—for—"

"That will do on that subject," I interrupted. "Tune in on something else. I don't want any pay or any thanks; I want to help you out and be your friend, that's all. Haven't you already got the idea that I, too, am alone. I understand your—but that will do for tonight. You are going to bed—and that very soon. No questions asked.

I produced a pair of my pajamas for her, and let down the Murphy bed, telling her that I would go in and bunk with one of the boys down near the end of the hall, that is, when he came in, which was usually late. Then I turned the back of the big chair toward the bed and settled myself with a magazine while she went to bed. Soon I could hear the little movements, the sighs, and then the subdued breathing which made me know she was asleep.

It wasn't very late—not as late as I usually went to bed—but I listened every second for the footsteps of Stowers, with whom I would invite myself to spend the night. Once I went out to make sure that he hadn't come, but his door was still locked, and there was no response to my knocking. It was then I decided to make myself comfortable for the time being. I pulled up another chair to rest my feet on, found a blanket on the closet shelf, and prepared to sleep comfortably until Stowers came.

My thumb was on the button ready to turn off the light when I cast a last glance at her lying there asleep. She was smiling—her lips curled such a way as to make me wonder why I hadn't noticed before what a beautiful mouth she had. Her hair was a thick mass of curls on my pillow. "Poor little kiddie," I whispered, and kissed a little upturned palm on the bedspread.

When I awoke I was aware of at least two things: I had been asleep for some time, and I was very comfortable in my make-shift bed. Readjusting my cushion-pillow and further lowering my Morris chair, I decided to remain there for the rest of the night.

"Breakfast is about ready," was the first thing I heard the next morning. I jumped up, thinking it was all a dream or something, but the little stranger was standing

in full view, smiling down in a way that made me remember everything. She was wearing my old cook-apron and was in the act of frying some bacon and eggs.

"I'll have my breakfast in bed, please," I shot back in such a way as to make her see the funny side of it all.

It was Sunday. We took our time for the breakfast, but I became very anxious to see about the plan I had worked out the night before. And, as a result of this plan, I went to the real estate man I rented my apartment from and signed another lease for the tiny kitchenette apartment just across the hall from mine. I paid the first month's rent and gave Ann enough money to go after her things. By evening she was settled and joyously happy in her little apartment.

IT WAS three weeks before my friend found an opening in his office for her. But the work that he finally got for her was just the work that she liked best, and I was glad she waited for it.

I noticed that every time I gave her any money for her needs she jotted it down in a little book. Finally I persuaded her to show me the book. At the top was, "Borrowed from Ronald" and under this heading was every cent I had handed her. I protested; I had meant it as a gift. She insisted that it was a loan, saying that every cent was to be paid back.

Every pay-day night she rapped at my door, came in, and handed me what she could spare from her earnings, receipting it in her little book.

And, forgetting the "business" side of our affair, every few evenings I spent with her. She cooked delightful suppers in her kitchenette, and was a jolly little busybody besides. I often hung around until after midnight, but she made me feel so "at home" that I found it very hard to return to my lonely room across the hall.

This went on for several months before I allowed myself to believe that I was very much in love with her. Then when I realized that I could never go back to my old way of living—or was it really living?—I knew that I would never be satisfied with less than a wedding ring for her. The idea! A fellow as old as I, simply acting silly over a girl that he met in this fashion! I went to sleep to dream of her, and awoke in the morning thinking of her. After work I could hardly wait until I could rap on her door to see that she had arrived safely.

One night after we had supper together in her apartment, and were sitting in the living-room, I went over and sat on the arm of her chair, very much like I had done on that first night. But this time she did not shrink from me; she looked up, tantalizing me with that smile that no one else could claim. I took her hands—her soft, little hands—and asked her to marry me. "Why, Ronald, I thought we were just to be pals," she smiled, not looking up.

"Why didn't you say something new, like 'This is so sudden!' That's exactly what I'm asking you. I want us to be pals—pals for life," I answered.

She was suddenly serious. I saw then that her answer was going to be quite different from what I had hoped.

"No, dear, I am not free to marry now. Some time, perhaps."

I got up from the arm of her chair, intensely hurt, and somehow jealous. What could it mean—this *now* that she so emphasized.

"Not free to marry me!" But she seemed very definite. I couldn't ask her to explain. Was there some catch in her little game after all?

I was unreasonably angry, darting out the door before she had time to rise. I slammed the door as I went out and across the hall into my own room. Ann followed, but I had locked the door before she could reach it, and did not respond to her repeated knocking. Then for long hours I sat thinking—thinking bitterly. I had not expected her to refuse me.

For two weeks I did not see Ann—two of the longest weeks I ever lived. But if she thought I was going to drop around and apologize, or give her opportunity for reconsideration she was mistaken. No, not I!

And then pride began to falter, and I caught myself thinking that I shouldn't expect her to fall into my arms at the very first word.

My mind was fully made up to call on her that night, when all of a sudden there came the familiar tapping on the panel. I opened the door and Ann stepped in. She handed me two bills.

"This is all I owe you, Ronald. Will you please receipt it in full?"

I didn't understand it, but I did as asked. Then she tore the little book to pieces which she laid on the ashtray, setting fire to the scraps with a lighted match. After she stood and watched the last bit of flame die away, she came to me with outstretched hands.

"I am free now, Ronny. Is your proposition still good? Will you marry me?"

"Will I? Why, Ann, I've wanted you every minute since I—since I found you," I said, taking her in my arms.

"Of course it's silly, but I did not feel free until I had paid you every cent I owed, dear."

"Then you really love me, Ann? You really—"

"From the first night, you big VICTIM of a hold-up. Are you still a little bit dubious—?"

"Yes, you little waif—"

AND then we forgot everything for a few moments that were filled with tears of happiness and the assurance that we understood one another at last.

Shall I Go to Him?

[Continued from page 57]

days in my little car, driving around the beautiful country, exploring the many little by-ways off the main road. I was driving along a country lane one afternoon when I had to turn out for a big car which was coming toward me.

Imagine my surprise when I saw Dick at the wheel, and at his side a woman! Her head was resting on his shoulder, her eyes looking up at him as he talked. So absorbed was he in her that he never saw me.

I was greatly puzzled. What was he

doing here when he was supposed to be in his store attending to business? Who was this woman? Whose car was he driving?

I drove to Mother's and unburdened my mind. She gave me some good advice about not neglecting my husband and told me it would be wise to say nothing about it. I took her advice and let it drop.

About a week later I called at the store unexpectedly and the clerk informed me Dick was in his office, which was at the rear of the store.



"—And in the Room Dreams!"

"—and when I came to see you last night there were mystery and magic all about you. The familiar room was touched with the faint breath of dreams. And you were subtly, marvelously changed. Why was it only then I seemed to know the mystery of you . . .?"

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I went back. Finding the door ajar, I gave it a slight shove, thinking to surprise him. I found him—with the other woman in his arms. When he saw me he pushed her roughly aside and came toward me. But I gave him no chance to speak. I fairly ran from the place.

Instinctively I drove to Mother's. When I had become quieted somewhat she urged me to go back home and give him a chance to explain. I thought I never wanted to see him again, but finally consented. When I arrived home he was there. I found him seated in his favorite chair, slumped forward, his head in his hands.

HE LOOKED so forlorn and miserable, I wanted to go to him and comfort and love him like a mother does her little son who has been naughty and is sorry. I waited for him to speak.

Here is the substance of his story: He had known the woman for some time before he knew me, but only as a manager of a store knows a wealthy and valued customer. After our marriage she had started making friendly advances, paying him compliments, and she finally asked him to go riding with her. It all ended by her offering to give him the money for his own store if in return he would be—her lover. He refused at first, but finally consented.

He had been trying for some time to break off their relations and had offered to pay the money back, but she refused to accept it. His one consolation had been that I need never know.

He begged me to forgive him and promised faithfully he would never see her again. But there was no forgiveness in my heart now. He had destroyed that which was dearer than life to me—my beautiful faith in him.

Had he told me he had been infatuated or even temporarily in love I could have forgiven him. But to deliberately sell himself! To forget his marriage vows for money. It seemed unbelievable.

I paid no heed to his pleas for forgiveness. I felt as though I could never trust him again. I told him I was leaving for

good and he need never ask me to come back.

When I again reached Mother's I was really ill from heartache and worry. But it took me some time to realize there was something more than mental illness troubling me.

I consulted our family physician and learned of the little life that is to be. I resented it deeply at first. After all I had suffered for Dick, was it right that I must suffer to bring his child into the world?

But time heals all wounds and the bitterness is nearly all gone from my heart. Mother tries her best to comfort me and keep me happy.

But her love does not suffice. I want Dick! More than anything else in the world I want to feel the comfort of his dear arms about me and hear his whispered words of love in my ear.

Although five months have slipped by, I have not seen him once. He has never tried to see me or communicate with me in any way.

I know he has sold his store and is working again in the same old place. He is living alone in our little home, and friends tell me he looks old and weary and sad.

What shall I do? If he would only come to me now I would so gladly forgive him. I can't go to him without being asked. And yet, can I stay away?

Mother thinks he doesn't come to me because he believes he has wronged me too greatly to ever hope for forgiveness. "If it were not for the little one," she reminds me, "perhaps you would not be so willing to forgive."

She thinks it is my duty to go back and make my peace with Dick. I think I should wait until he comes to me. I didn't do the wrong, so why should I make the advances?

If I do, won't he think I am too easy, and perhaps be tempted again, sometime, to do the same thing over? What shall I do?

How long will my pride sustain me when my whole being is calling out for Dick, my husband, my lover?

Some Men Tell

[Continued from page 15]

"Good," I told him, coming to my feet. "And you'll get it all here. Come in."

"Hell, man!" he exclaimed suddenly. "If that ain't charity, then what do you call it?"

My lounging room was deserted and the darkness made it a good ten degrees cooler than the street. We spoke never a word as he followed me to my hotel desk across one end of the room. He stood uncertainly, leaning on the highly polished mahogany which had once done service in a national institution of the past, as I slipped behind it, spun around my thick register, and handed him a pen.

"We're not strong on names," I told him as the pen trembled in his nervous fingers. "Smith has been done to death, though. If your head ain't clear, why, Smith will do until you think up a better one."

He hesitated long, then taking a sudden grip on himself and with half a sneer in his voice:

"How about a number? I've got a good head for figures."

"Numbers don't go here." I didn't smile—didn't even resent his attitude. Here was a poor unfortunate who had nearly reached the end of his rope. Starvation was written in those eyes and cheeks.

And then he grabbed the pen firmly and filled up the whole line. I swung it about

and looked at the name. Clear, well rounded letters—the hand-writing perhaps of a college professor.

"Archibald Trevor," stood out like a sore thumb above the puny, uncertain, cramped writing of the other guests.

"You'll want food and new clothes; a shave, a bath, and—" I leaned far over the desk—"a new pair of shoes. Better make it an entire outfit. Not just sure of the price, but it'll come close to fifty dollars. Cost you a hundred any place else."

Those great sunken eyes stared vacantly up at me. But he didn't get a chance to speak. I went right on—never noticing the quivering lips or the trembling limbs.

I'LL take you below—Levy does all our work. A cup of coffee first, and after that a good blow-out, say, steak and potatoes. Then you've got to sign for the stuff, pay when you can, as little or as much as you like at a time. One condition only—it must all be clean money."

Was the look in his eyes crafty or simply amazement? For once I couldn't read my man. Too much suffering lurked behind it. Character was hidden; desperation was there—cunning, maybe; fear, too; and perhaps even a touch of horror. No crook worth his salt could look like that, unless he had battled for honesty. I

wanted this man to be within my doors. "Suppose I never paid—just walked out later?" His voice was very low, like a man who seriously balanced the proposition.

"That would be your loss and not mine. I let him think that one out, and somehow he didn't get it at all.

"The police, then, I suppose." And the attempted shrug of his shoulders was a pitiable failure.

"One thing more—" I pointed the pen straight at him—"and get this in your mind. Doc Fay works for God, not for the police. Think that over tonight, when you're between clean sheets. If you don't get it then, don't ask questions. You'll never understand it."

"Still one thing more," and he kind of gulped. "I'll be needing money. How about that?"

"There's a dollar a day allowance that goes on the bill," I told him.

"I'll need more than that." A claw-like hand crept out and encircled my wrist. "Much more. Can I borrow money? I've got to have money." Then, "If I can't get it, say so and—you can keep the clothes."

"You can get it, maybe. I have my bank in the back room." I jerked a thumb over my shoulder toward the little door behind the desk. "It ain't easy to get here, though. Still, take that card below, and talk to me when you're a new man. There's nothing more." This talk of money, I didn't like. There are men of course who'd rob a church. Then, to sort of play fair with him, "Money's very hard to get; at the worst, you've got nothing to lose." I pressed a little button beneath the desk.

"Or gain either, perhaps," I heard him mutter as he turned toward the swinging doors, from which Happy had entered.

"Levy will fix this gentleman up, Happy," I told my only help besides the cook. "You'll tell him about keeping his own room—clean."

AND Happy frowned and scowled and rubbed his hands together as he cocked up his weak little face toward the ragged stranger.

Happy was anything but what his name implied. The boys had wished that name on him a year back. A snow bird, he was; cocaine, his failing, and I was trying to cure him. A broken, shifting piece of manhood, and, like a child sometimes, very bold at others. In some ways he was an experiment. Often I wanted to help those poor creatures of another world, but even I did not fully understand. With Happy, well, I was feeding him the drug slowly, cutting down gradually—it had been a month now—and though his eyes had often begged piteously with the craving, he had not spoken. Stronger will, I put it down to, and only would he get it when he asked for it. Not intelligent, was Happy—a sort of shrewd, low cunning, that is found in well-trained animals, and nothing more. But the drug, Happy could only get it from me. He was known as Doc Fay's protégé; the peddlers let him alone. Not respect, in them, but fear—fear of my boys, and a real, immediate fear. If it is given to me to hate, it was these jackals who would first feel my wrath. Yes, a rapid fire gun, sweeping them from the city, much as Christ flogged the money lenders from the temple. But they feared me. To give Happy dope would have been a death warrant to the most powerful and influential of these vultures.

I didn't know Archibald Trevor when he stepped before my desk a good two and a half hours later. Nothing left now but the sunken cheeks and the hollow eyes, and even they had a new glow in them—faint perhaps, but the breath of life was there. A tall, handsome man, high forehead, determined chin, light hair that had not



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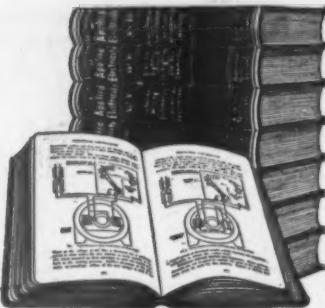
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altogether lost its wave by the hands of the barber. And his gait was steadier, the hand which I took less listless, and his speech more even, with the defiance of desperation almost entirely eliminated.

Two boys, checking out as Archibald crossed the room, hesitated and watched us from before the barren fireplace. It was an old story to me. The one boy, clear-eyed, straight of shoulder, gripped me with a firm hand across the counter.

"It's Chicago, Doc," he told me. "I'd rather stay in the city, but it means more money, bigger things, and a better opportunity for the kid. It's the first time I've had the price to have the family together in ten years. Thank God, Doc—and you."

A hard criminal he had been; now there was a mist before his eyes, a break in his voice, a rising sob in his throat as his hand shook mine. Here was a man who'd bring the promise of happiness to others. And he was gone—turning and waving once as he passed out the door.

I DIDN'T say anything as I returned the wave. I'd seen a lot of human emotion, but my heart never grew accustomed to it. There was something in my throat that held back the speech—a lump that a man can't feel ashamed of, though it brings the color to his cheeks.

The other boy stood by the door, his head half down, a suit-case just hanging in his listless fingers, and his feet scraping back and forth upon the worn carpet.

"Good-by, Doc. Thanks for—you're a man—a real man—the man that—that I ain't." His voice broke, too, but how different! He didn't have to tell me—he didn't need to look me in the eyes. I knew. Bad grammar, bad enunciation, but most of all, bad thinking; yet those last words of his were a classic, if you get what I mean. "The man that—that I ain't." There was a volume of life written there. Grim tragedy of youth! He had failed. This boy was plodding the wrong road, searching for the false glitter of an imaginary happiness which had not been earned and therefore could not be found. As plain as if he had spoken the words, I knew that that night he would pull off a job. A week, a month, a year perhaps—and the grim gray wall would claim him again; then another stretch of time and he'd be back with me. For years perhaps he'd be a debit on the book—the red ink of a man's soul.

I think there was a sort of an awe in Archibald's voice as he sidled up to the desk. The tableau had been before him; he read what was written on each man's face.

"One takes your hand and goes—one just goes?" It was more a spoken thought than a question.

"Just a house rule." I couldn't hold back the sign. "It's all how you leave—just a habit; the boys give only a clean hand to me. While they're under my roof they've got to play the game honest; when they leave—" I shrugged my shoulders, with an indifference that I did not feel.

"Do—do I have to make a promise for—all this?" He ran his hand over his new clothes. "I made a promise—just a few days ago—and broke it."

"No promises—nothing." I shook my head. "No secrets, either."

"And when I go, I go without question?" His look was a puzzled one. Evidently he had had experiences with sky-pilots at one time or another.

"I'm only the arsenal that supplies the weapons," I told him. "You've got to fight your own battle. There ain't no other way. If I can't help I'm willing to listen, but not to question. There's a room for confidences in the back—like the bank." I smiled. "Do you still think you need money?"

"My God, I do." And there was a different ring in his voice. "I haven't the right to these clothes—that food."

"Come in the back." I turned around sharply as he passed through the swinging gate and through the door behind the curtain. I was set sort of hard now. This, I didn't like. Hundreds of times strangers who didn't know had tried to flim-flam me in one way or another. The regulars, never—and there had been boys who had done five and six stretches, and yet came back to me each time.

"Now—" I swung on him. "Sit there. What's on your chest?"

And he told me. For once I was wrong. I didn't stop him when he got going. What I got out of the story was old enough to me. Four years was his stretch, the baby was born while he was in stir; and his girl wife stuck to him—stuck when he promised he'd live straight after he came out. And he did—for her and the kid. But things had gone bad . . . old associates called for him . . . for a year they had drifted from place to place. And now, the day before he had lifted food—noting more—he had come to me. He wanted work. What would become of his family while he fought his way back up the ladder? Now had come another baby.

"God is good to the poor," he finished, and if there wasn't bitterness enough in his speech there was bitterness enough in his heart.

He was a broken man now, his head upon his hands, his shoulders heaving. When a strong man weeps, his heart is full; but it's also in the right place, and this man wept silently—without a tear and without a cry.

I had him on his feet, shaking him by the shoulders.

"The bank's open, boy," I told him. "Your case is only like hundreds of others. I want you here—I like my boys where I can see them; but your wife and the children, why, that can be settled in five minutes—less." I turned and picked up the phone. Two minutes later things were fixed with Mr. Mallory, uptown in the Nineties.

"I have a boarder for you, Mrs. Mallory," I simply told her. "Mrs. Trevor and two young children—one a baby; they'll need a sunny room—nothing too expensive, but I'll leave that to you." Then I turned to the man who now seemed little more than a boy.

"Fixed." I patted his shoulder. "Take this card." I wrote hurriedly on it. "Get them up there at once—she's the best cook in the city."

AND you don't call this charity," he stammered.

"Not a bit of it," I told him. "I'll advance you the money to pay Mrs. Mallory. She won't know your business. Some day you'll pay—they all do." And they did, one way or another. "Tomorrow there'll be a job for you. What's your line?"

"Real estate." His voice was so faint that I hardly caught the words. But it was enough. The Consolidated were building hundreds of little homes up in Westchester. This boy was to have a big chance, and I told him so. What he had done time for, I never asked; such is the secret of my success. But I dare say that both of us slept better that night. Could I save him from the lure of the old life? That he was not new to the game was certain. Two old-timers recognized him in the lounging room that night. I saw their eyes go up, and his frown, as the past flashed back on him. But, true to the code of the house, no word was spoken of the days that had been. Yet, inside, I knew that in his day Archibald had ranked high in some field of the criminal world. Hard men to help, these. Associates

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32x5 1/2	4.75	35x4	2.95
33x5 1/2	5.00	35x4 1/2	3.00
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feel the need of their special qualities—jobs that require, perhaps, the technique of a master, and, oh, I liked Archibald.

A week later I had a visit from Duke Fitzgerald. These were always pleasant moments. He just slipped through the little back door that gave entrance from the side-street to my sanctuary. From him I heard of Archibald and the others. After all, was mine a work of self sacrifice, as one of the great Sunday papers had so placarded it in a double-page feature of the magazine section? I thought not. If in a slight way I helped to bring happiness to others, what of myself? I was repaid one thousand fold for every moment I had given to another. I had tasted of spiritual emotions that would put to shame the puny, imaginary, short-lived animal appetites of man. Crooks are like children; they but play at the great game of life.

CRIMINALS have sent for me in the dead of night . . . dying men . . . repentant men . . . those who in the final battle shot it out with their great enemy, the law, and lost. Secrets of the dead; secrets of the living! I believe that I carry more things locked in my heart than any other man. The born criminal is a rare bird, indeed. The man without a touch of goodness in his whole being, one in a thousand.

Archibald, the name which he had stuck to and which had stuck to him, was working hard. A real hustler, Duke found him; and Archibald, with boyish enthusiasm, expected to put over a big apartment house deal; one that would lift him from poverty to, well, at least security, perhaps, from temptation. Although Archibald must have recognized in the features of the man who stepped from the big car, the General Manager of The Consolidated Realty Co., he said nothing. Silence is a virtue. In that respect the keen criminals equal the big business men.

Archibald's apartment house deal blew up. That interested me; this would test the metal of the man. Early in the game for him, no doubt, but since those hollow cheeks had filled out and the sunken eyes regained a certain lustre, I had read character—real character—in his face.

Not outwardly was Archibald disturbed—smiling, debonair, confident—but he no longer was capable of a direct gaze when he talked with me, and twice now I had seen him over on Third Avenue, with two well known box-men—high class safe-crackers, both of them. Was that then Archibald's lay? Still, it was his battle. Every man must go through with it. To scale a mountain in an elevator is not a very commendable achievement. But that night I decided to help; I decided to talk to him of his wife and kiddies.

Eleven o'clock came, and even twelve. The boys had long since gone to bed, and Archibald had not returned. Happy shuffled about, his feet easing along the carpet, to scrape occasionally on the hard stone before the fire place. Furtively he watched me, his anxious, shrewd little eyes dropping to the floor; his dust brush mechanically gathering imaginary dirt. His thin hands trembled visibly. Poor Happy! I pitied him then. There was good even in him—a fighter, in a way. He knew he needed only to ask me for the stuff to get it; to end at once that craving which was gnawing at his whole system. Yet he spoke not a word, and I—I held my tongue and waited. Doctors had failed, public institutions had failed, and I, well, I was determined to stand anything from this poor creature if I could make him whole again.

It was as hard on me as it was on him, his presence there. The animal-like suffering in his eyes, though the tongue would not speak. I was glad when he turned and

with an inarticulate gurgle bade me good-night. I nodded as he slowly ascended the broad old stairs. Somewhere in that emancipated body was the reviving germ of a lost manhood. If I could conquer here, where so many had failed, a great work surely lay before me.

Twelve-thirty! Twice I stepped to the door and looked out upon the great broad highway. A clear, bright moon, glittering distant stars here and there above the buildings—not a night that I often went abroad. Those enemies of society that slunk through the shadows would stay within doors with such a sky.

It must have been close to one o'clock when by the door I paused, stayed my hand upon the knob, and peered through the thick interlaced curtains that hung across the screened square in the tiny window that still remained open. Voices came clearly to me. From the darkness within I looked into the darkness without, made out but dimly two figures that stood upon the steps. The one was Archibald. His voice was not pleasant; his laugh low and foreboding.

"I'm almost forgetting, Maul." He addressed his companion. "Here, take this." His hand shot to his hip, and, for the fraction of a second, silver flashed in the moonlight. It was a heavy revolver that Archibald extended to his partner. "Take it," he said simply. "Keep it for me . . . later."

"What's the matter?" The other looked up. Thick lips met below a flat nose; eyes hidden in the greater shadows of a huge, wide-peaked hat.

"A rule of the house." Archibald spoke over his shoulder. "Doc don't permit them. Not that I care; it's his honor, as he sees it—and I see it."

The other laughed—a coarse, crackling laugh.

"The Bible-Stiff—him no less—playing on a bird like you. Archie, me boy, you'll be lecturing later. Why, he's been the ruin of more of the gentry than any dick who ever railroaded an honest yegg. Him—the dirty, preachin'—"

Archie swung about so suddenly that the other was nearly thrown from the steps. A hand stretched out, gripped the stranger's shoulder; his face shot forward, and only the grim side of the mouth was visible to me, but his words reached me clear enough.

"He don't interfere with me, and he don't interfere with you. Another word, Maul—" and his voice shook with anger, then his hand dropped to his side. "We need each other—me as much as you—but I'll bust you wide open." Not elegant perhaps, but sincere enough, I thought.

I KNEW Maul. He was a mighty bad actor—a mighty bad man to threaten, especially when he had a gun. Now his fingers clutched about the weapon that Archibald had thrust into his hand. As for me, I half reached my hip pocket. Funny action in a man who preached the Word of God, maybe, but you can't save a man's soul if he loses the body that harbors it.

Maul's hand half swung the gun around, then his lips parted, and he tried to smile—even shrugged his shoulders a bit. A clever, treacherous thug, this; yet he shoved the gun suddenly into his pocket. His need of Archibald must have been real and immediate. Enough! I turned from the door, sought my big chair by the fire, and threw myself into it. A minute—two—three passed, and the door swung open. Archibald came in, passed quickly across the room, pretended not to see my figure by the fireplace, and started up the stairs.

"Trevor," I called sharply. Somehow, when speaking to him, the name "Archibald" stuck in my throat. He swung about, half leaned over the balustrade, as if try-



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ing to make me out in the semi-darkness of the single light at the foot of the steps.

"You, Doc, up at this hour?" A jar that, for there seemed to be a touch of interest—real interest—in his voice.

"Always up till the last man's in," I told him. "How's the family?"

That jarred him and he showed it. His eyes narrowed; the wrinkles shot into his forehead and the sunkenness of his cheeks that I thought had disappeared seemed to come again.

"Fine," he said at length, and the sincerity of a moment before was gone. He lied and he knew it. Also his body was swinging around, his left foot slowly seeking the step above. Every action of his body, every movement of his facial muscles, the very determined, outward thrust of his chin—all gave him away. Here was a man who had lived hard, drunk of the dregs of life, served his time in the pen, and some people say that criminals have no conscience. He was going wrong and he was paying the price even before his first real downward step. Yes, sir—there are times when many a man wears his conscience plainly across his face.

"A smoke, Trevor," I called again. "Ten minutes before retiring—eh?"

"Pretty tired, Doc." Then, seeing that my eyes were upon him, "Oh, if you say so." There was a careless swing to his body, an almost graceful carriage to his suddenly straightened head as he swung down the steps and stood before me.

"How's business?" I asked.

"Oh—so, so." His eyes tried to hold mine and failed.

"And the apartment deal?"

"Higher than a kite—blew up. Things are rotten, Doc, and there's the truth of the matter. Three weeks, and nothing—not even a prospect of anything. If all the boys you carried were as successful as I was, you'd soon close up your doors and hang out the TO LET sign."

"I've carried boys for weeks—months; one, close to a year," I told him. "The year one is about to be made vice-president of a million dollar company," I added.

"God—no!" His eyes brightened for a moment. "That'll be the bird in the big car—Mr. Fitzgerald, maybe." No crafty look in his eyes; just the rushing of thought to his tongue.

"We don't bother with names of pasts here," I corrected him gently enough. "You've got to climb slowly to success. The apartment sale stood to net you something in the thousands, Trevor. You didn't deserve that so soon, you know; there's the small houses to begin with."

He didn't get it, for his mind was far

away. Of a sudden, his eyes clouded.

"I'll be a long time going up the ladder at this rate, Doc." A pause, in which his eyes failed to meet mine, though he battled to make them. Then, "You'll be needing an adding machine to keep my record in the book." And his laugh was a hollow thing, indeed.

"There's the family." I watched him now, and I scored—too heavily, maybe. He hated himself for what he was planning to do; hated himself, yet tried to lie to his conscience that it was for his wife and children. Had I gone too far? There was that in his eyes which told me that he'd turn in a minute, leave my house, and take the down road.

ROME wasn't built in a day," I finished R hastily.

"No, but it was burnt in one. If you can't build your own foundation you can tear it away from someone else's." And if that ain't the finest piece of backward thinking I ever heard—why—but he had turned and run up the stairs. There was hope yet then. His fight was a lone one—and he knew it. But something told me that I was going to lose Archibald Trevor.

And the next day I did. It was hard for me to see him go without an effort to stop him—the hardest job I ever tried. But that was the code of my house—the very foundation of the little success I had made. Unreasonable, to stand by and watch a man go straight to hell? Maybe—but then, I must play the game as the boys and I understood it. I had gone a point further with Archibald, hoping against hope when I saw him framed there, with the tiny bundle wrapped in newspaper half-hidden beneath his arm. I stretched forth a hand, a hand that he didn't—couldn't—grasp. He took a half-step toward me, paused, spun about, stopped again, and flashed a look quickly over the deserted office.

"I'm sorry, Doc—" His words hardly reached me across the thirty feet—no more—but the words that followed it I did not get. But I did know that probably for the first time in his life this man had used the name of God in reverence—and the "bless you" too was something I hoped that I had heard. Funny that! Archibald Trevor was deliberately choosing the wrong road.

And me? There came a new emotion—one that you needn't envy. But I just wrote the debit in the great book and slammed it closed. A shiver . . . the red ink for once stood out like blood. And believe me when I tell you that I'm anything but a sentimental man. Not me.

(Continued in the February issue)

Suppose It Were Your Wife!

[Continued from page 20]

interminable moment. It was as though I had shouted to her, for all the world to hear:

YOU must see! I am setting no other in your place. For you I have built a throne in the Room-with-the-Locked-Door. And though I may never enter that room, and I know that within it there exists a thing beautiful and undefined, a thing that shall be light to my feet, salve to my heart and hope to my soul. This once may I speak of it, that there shall be no misunderstanding. Then, having realized the wisdom of bringing happiness where we may, we can speak of it no more. But we do not forget."

And her eyes, reading mine, told me that she understood, and that I had done the bigger and better thing; for which, somewhere, somehow, reward was as inevitable as time. I felt strangely at peace after

that night. Lela and I, Marian and Arthur and my father, became an inseparable quintet. Arthur came to lean upon me almost as dependently as he leaned on Marian, sensing my sympathy, knowing my friendship was real. We became as one family, content in the society of each other, firmly established on a footing that nothing short of an emotional earthquake or a sublime tragedy could threaten. Well—they both came!

In the fall of the following year my father, perhaps the most richly loved member of the Cheney-Tyle quintet, contracted typhoid fever. Lela, being on the threshold of motherhood, was under the care of our family physician. He forbade her entering the sickroom and told me to uphold his command. Father had always possessed an iron constitution, but seemingly those are the people typhoid strikes most malignantly. It was a grim battle from the first, and

he was delirious most of the time. The doctors and nurses couldn't keep him quiet unless one of the family were in the room. We didn't dare leave him for an hour.

Lela was debarred, Arthur was helpless. Marian and I had to fill the bill. One of us was constantly at his side, talking to him, holding his hand, soothing him when his delirium rose in the pitch of fever. Often we were there together, and those days are both bitter and sweet to me yet. Today in my mind's eye I can see Marian bending over him to rearrange his pillows, Marian bringing a glass of cool water, Marian squeezing orange juice into a spoon, Marian fanning him, reading to him, even singing at times some low croon to soothe. Marian—Marian—Marian!

Arthur, little dreaming the price he was to pay for his generosity, urged her to do all she could for my father, passing the lonely hours without her uncomplainingly, saying that at least he could stand and wait, being of no other appreciable use. After seven wearying weeks of struggle, Father was convalescent. But the malignant disease, reaching out its damnable lethal tentacles, sought the most depleted body within its territory. The day my son was born, Arthur's voice came frantically over the telephone, calling me.

"I want Mr. Cheney—Cheney, Junior, oh, Anson! That you? Lord, this is awful! Marian—"

"Yes?" The Room-with-the-Locked-Door shook as though both earthquake and tragedy had suddenly assailed it. I felt even my voice shake as I asked—"She isn't sick?"

"Sick! Oh, God!" The blind man's voice broke. "Five or six days ago she began to feel bad, thought she was just worn out with nursing, wouldn't let me tell you, didn't realize what was wrong. Three days ago she went to bed in violent pain—I wanted to call you then, but she forbade it, said you had enough to worry you. Lela, you know—"

YES," I cut in. I shan't forget very soon how I was shaking all over, like a leaf in a storm. "Be quick, man!"

"Typhoid ulcer—" Arthur gasped, "peritonitis. She died—just now. Anson—I'm going crazy!"

"Steady, old man." Only his need of me held me up. "Steady—I'll be right over." But I stood rooted in the avalanche of cataclysm after I'd hung up the phone. And the Locked-Door swung open to admit the passage of a shadowy figure entering to take its place on the throne within.

The succeeding hour with Arthur Tyle was the most harrowing hour I have ever known. I couldn't get him away from Marian. He knelt by her, running his thin white fingers over her still face, calling her, begging her to answer, to come back just long enough to say good-by. She had died in a state of coma. Only when the undertaker came to remove her body could I get him to give any attention to me. It took three of us to keep him from following her out the door. When he had quieted down somewhat, I took him with me because I didn't dare leave him alone, returned home, left him downstairs with my father and sought Lela. I sat down on the edge of her bed. She took one look at my face and gasped,

"Anson Cheney! What's the matter?" "Lela," I tried to get a grip on myself. "Arthur Tyle has just—been left alone." Lela's strength had not been taxed greatly. She was already talking with glowing delight of return to social activity. Now she looked at me blankly.

"Marian! You can't mean—?"

"Yes. Only this morning." My voice stuck in my throat. "Typhoid crept on her—ulcer developed, followed by peritonitis. She wore herself down tending Father—

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nothing left with which to fight—went out like a candle. Arthur's panic-stricken. As soon as you're strong enough let's have the poor chap over for a while. Can you?"

"Why, Anson, of course!" She reached out to grip my hand, as always quick to understand and ready to aid. "Right away! It won't bother me at all. You know how he leans on you."

So, leaning on us like a frightened child, Arthur came—and stayed. As though by unspoken agreement Marian's name was never mentioned. To all of us her sacrifice was bitterly raw in our hearts. But it was an indissoluble bond, binding us together more powerfully than tie of blood or breed. We all felt that we owed Arthur something we could never pay. In the depths of our own grief, we all instinctively thought first of Arthur. Time began to slip along, and it was as though he had always been one of the family.

Three years after Marian's death we heard of a surgeon in France who was accomplishing wonders for injured eyes. He had restored sight which other famous surgeons had considered permanently destroyed. It wasn't long till that French surgeon was the main topic of conversation in our household. And Arthur, grimly refusing to be too optimistic, decided to cross the Atlantic in search of the wonder-worker in one last attempt to regain his sight.

THEN the third tragedy of my life struck me. And as I had done before, when I was at my rope's end, I sought my father in his office. He looked up as I entered, gave one sharp glance into my face and straightened in his chair with an apprehensive frown.

"What is it?" he asked quickly.

For a moment I stood before him, motionless, striving for speech. Then I got it out, baldly.

"My wife wants a divorce."

"A divorce? A divorce!" Father stared at me blankly, blinking his eyes. "What are you talking about?"

"Just that," I answered, evenly.

"But, good Lord! Anson—that's sheer nonsense! Everyone knows Lela has loved you all your life."

"No," I countered, "It isn't nonsense. I wish to God it were!" I crossed the room and seated myself in a chair by the window, striving to have it over quickly and be done with it. "She thought she loved me. It's the old story of long years of companionship being mistaken for something deeper, of being in love with love. Marriage has taught her the difference. It always does. She's terribly cut up about it. Doesn't want to hurt me and all that. But she can't help it. I understand, and I shan't try to hold her. I told her so."

"But, Anson—" he interrupted.

"Please." I held up my hand, appealing for silence. I couldn't endure arguing it over right then. "The funny thing about it is that I've grown to love her so desperately, she's been so darned fine to me, and I've got so used to her. There's something so inexorable in that business of growing used to a person. But I can't hold her. I remember when Marian and I fought it out, you told me if you were Arthur you wouldn't want to hold a wife who didn't want to be held. I've thought of that."

"But that was in the case she loved another man," Father cut in sharply. "This isn't another man!"

"I fear it is." I nodded. Words were getting beyond me. "I fancy it grew primarily out of pity—pity for his sudden bereavement, for his helplessness. Though I hope the French surgeon can set him right again."

"My God, Anson—" Father's face was ghastly. "You don't mean—Tyle?"

I nodded again. I couldn't speak. I sat there, eyes straight ahead, and I felt my hands, hanging at my sides, clenched in an involuntary convulsion of pain, and my lips tightening grimly.

"The irony of it!" My father made a pitiful, helpless gesture toward me. "Anson—anything I can do—"

I shook my head, beyond any coherent utterance. I felt suddenly weary and old. Lela had grown so close. This thing had come so suddenly, I had never once had the slightest suspicion that she was learning to think too much of Arthur Tyle. There was nothing for me to do—hadn't his wife died for my father? Then, as we sat there, gripped in a tense silence neither of us could break, we heard footsteps ascend the stairs, approach the door—and fingers, fingers that groped as they rapped.

My father's eyes flew to me in startled questioning. I motioned him to admit Arthur and say nothing of my presence. I didn't blame Tyle, but I couldn't have moved, nor have spoken to him then, to have saved my life. For a moment Father sat rigid in his chair, staring at me, then having comprehended what I wished he caught at his composure and called casually;

"Come in, Arthur."

The blind man entered, and stood hesitating to achieve his bearings before he crossed the room to my father's desk. Father rose to place a chair for him, but Arthur gestured with a protesting hand when he heard the chair legs scraping on the floor.

"No, I shan't sit. I've only a moment. But I had to see you, Mr. Cheney." Father did not reply, but stood looking into the strong blond face with grim eyes. Arthur's clear blind gaze turned upon him as though it could see, and he went on speaking. "You know I am going to France this month. Did you know Lela and Anson Junior are to accompany me?" I gripped the edge of my chair, and Father gasped at the baldness of Tyle's statement.

"I just received that information," Father replied levelly, and I was glad Arthur could not see his face.

"But you don't understand," Arthur answered quickly. "It is not as you think. Lela has—an hallucination. She does not understand herself. I admit frankly that I love her, yes, as I have loved no one but Marian. But—Anson is my friend." The fine, curly head went back proudly. "It—well, if you're right inside, it simply isn't done, you know."

My father's eyes sought my face, and we stared at each other like men hypnotized as he sank into his chair.

"Go on," he said.

SEE here, Mr. Cheney." Arthur's groping hand found the desk, and he leaned upon it, turning his head to catch the least sound from Father. "Lela adores her husband and her boy. But she's known Anson all her life. After marriage a woman sees other men with new eyes. New speculations and new thoughts enter her brain. And where pity is added it is only too easy to confound it with—something else. Something deeper is bound to follow, even though the something deeper is nothing but an hallucination engendered by circumstance and environment. It's so with Lela."

"Arthur," my father cut in desperately. "What are you trying to get at?"

"Simply this," Arthur answered quietly, but his fine face was grim. "I could wreck Anson's home, if I chose to take advantage of my love and Lela's mistaken pity. Also, since I have some sincere ideas of what is done and what isn't, I can save the situation."

"How?" Father interrupted sharply.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP,
MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC.,
REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS
OF AUGUST 24, 1912,

Of Smart Set, published monthly at New York, N. Y., for Oct. 1, 1925. State of New York, County of New York, as. Before me, a Notary in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared R. E. Berlin, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the Smart Set and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit: 1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publisher, Magnus Magazine Corporation, 119 West 40th Street, New York City; Editor, F. Orlin Tremaine, 119 West 40th Street, New York City; Managing Editor, None; Business Manager, R. E. Berlin, 119 West 40th Street, New York City. 2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) Magnus Magazine Corporation, 119 West 40th Street, New York City; Sole Stockholder, George d'Utassy, 119 West 40th Street, New York City. 3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None. 4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him. 5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the six months preceding the date shown above is. (This information is required from daily publications only.) R. E. Berlin, sworn to and subscribed before me this 30th day of September, 1925. William J. Sperl, Notary Public, Queens County, No. 3749. Certificate filed in New York Co., No. 809, Reg. No. 7644. (My commission expires March 30, 1927.)

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"Decent chaps are pretty much alike," Arthur replied, his blind eyes staring steady and unwavering at father. "And I tell you, sir, after a woman throws one away for another it isn't long before she comes to realize that she hasn't made the best bargain in the world. Then it's too late. Lela merely needs a change. She merely needs to see other people, other lands; she merely needs an enforced absence from Anson to set up a nostalgia in her heart for him that only he can heal."

"You—you intend—" Father choked out.

"To take her with me as friend and guide. She thinks otherwise. I have my reasons for letting her think so until we are gone. I shall show her, over there, that there is no man quite so worthy of her as Anson. I shall show her that deep in her heart there is room for no one but Anson. I shall bring to her recognition the tie of parenthood, and the duty she owes little Anson—for the child loves his father passionately. I shall make her immune to all future hallucinations; for I shall prove to her, by my own subtle course, that—there is no place like home! It can be done."

"Yes," my father whispered, his eyes never leaving my face. "It can be done." He hesitated; then as if driven by some inner thought, he asked, "What are you thinking?"

"Suppose—" the blind man answered softly—"suppose it had been my wife—eh? Anson—and—Marian! We're awfully sellish these days, sir. It's the fashion in this age to consider your own angle of a situation and to hell with the other fellow's. But it takes three angles to make a triangle, and I choose to consider the third angle—the husband's. It's a rotten thing to wreck another man's home. Anson would not have done that to me!"

"No!" Father exploded, springing to his feet, taking his eyes from me and striding around to face Arthur. "He wouldn't. My God, son—you're a man!" His eyes flashed to me. I knew what he thought. My own words had come back to me, almost exactly as I had spoken them. For a moment there was a vibrating silence. I can feel it yet. Then Arthur broke it, haltingly.

"It—it is a delicate matter. Honor binds my tongue. In another month or two I hope to come back with my sight. My sight! That is quite enough. But since I shall bring to Anson his wife, whose sight shall have been restored also, I shall hope to return to my friends. But I can't leave Anson in pain and bitterness. I can't say anything—but—you will see that he understands?"

My father gripped Arthur's hands. He was beyond speaking. Arthur repeated, appealing—

"You will tell Anson, please?"

I HAD had about all I could stand. I am not ashamed of the sob that shook me, rocketed through the room and shook Arthur, too. He started, turned his sightless face toward me, blanched and asked in a tense whisper;

"What was that?"

"Anson," Father answered, tears running down his face. "Anson is here."

"My God!" Arthur cried, and even today I can smile, as I smiled then, grasping at the relief of humor as we all grasp at laughter when we are on the verge of tears. Then I was on my feet, and across the room, my arm about his shoulder, and my voice blurred as I said,

"Your friends will be waiting. And may the surgeon not fail."

But he did fail. That was two years ago. Arthur, still blind, is the best loved member of my household today. I think Lela would die for him. I know I would. For at his hands came to me the greatest peace and happiness of my life.



What Girls and Women should know

"Why Alice, you are lovely today. You seem a different girl. That gown is wonderful. It seems to give you a much better figure and the coloring is just right for your complexion. Wait 'till Henry sees you now."

"It is nice, isn't it? I am now making a black velvet evening gown. Wait until you see that."

"Making it! What do you mean? Surely you didn't make that gown."

"Yes, I designed it and I made it. Otherwise I couldn't afford to have it."

"Why! I didn't know you could design and make gowns."

"I couldn't. But fortunately I read of a wonderful school that comes right into your own home, so that during your spare moments you can learn this art. It's exceedingly fascinating, to see the garments, made during the instruction, come into being out of practically nothing. And the joy of wearing them, knowing that you, yourself, created them. Why gowns," Alice went on, "I can now have three beautiful gowns for the money I formerly paid for one. On this one gown alone, I saved several times the cost of the instruction."

"Over 21,000 women have taken this instruction. You too ought to take it up. Why don't you? It is unnecessary to have sewing experience and you can give as much or as little time to the work as you like."

Start in Business

Many former students have opened Gown Parlors in their own homes, or elsewhere, and because of their special training have quickly built up a most desirable clientele. Gown and Costume Designing and Creating is one of the best paying vocations now open to women and girls.

Spare Time Work

Many have done work for their friends, during spare times, and increased their income from \$35 to \$80 a month.

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You can take up this fascinating work at your own home by mail, giving only your waste time to the work. Students usually find the lessons so fascinating that they give much more time to them than they had anticipated, passing up amusements and entertainments for the lessons.

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1,001 Nights on Broadway

[Continued from page 61]

"Sell you. Who wants to sell you? All I know is if a girl has some sense she could always took care of herself an' not get bounced or haf to quit a fine place, so her poor old mother should haf to keep her . . . and if you think you're gonna loaf around here like a queen, you get them shitory-book nonsense out o' your swelled head. You're gonna work, an' like it . . . this very morning you got out and find for yourself a chob, if it's peelin' p'taters in a saloon . . . no insane girls is gonna lif off o' me when they're too lazy or too crazy to get along with respectable rich peeples—what was so good to you, too, always gafe you yet extra tips besides your wages."

YES—tips. I hope you never know how I got them. I hope you never know the leers and the sneers—and my tears—that earned them."

"Oh, fancy talk—I think you get them notions out o' them mofies. Rich peeples like them, they wouldn't take no such chances wit' no such trash like you. Don't tell me. I wasn't born chesterday."

"I'm—I'm sorry, Mother. You don't or won't understand . . . good night."

"Hey—what you mean, good night? You ain't goin' no good night. You're gonna get a morning paper an' go hunt yourself work. If you think—"

There was a knock at the door. Mrs. Henderson answered, and in came Mrs. Moriarity, a bleary neighbor, with a can of beer in her hand, who breathlessly explained that she had come as soon as she had heard of the terrible thing that had happened to Jane. What was it all about, coming home like that in a patrol-wagon—so late, too—and—

"What's dis?" gasped Mrs. Henderson. "What is dis talk from padrol vagons?"

Jane started to tell how it had come about. Mrs. Henderson cut her off with a gesture, frantic, fierce, final.

"Shut up! Liar! Bum! I don't know what else . . . I won't belief a word of such a wild shitory . . . now I don't belief a word of any of it . . . it was bad enough. But dis padrol-vagon shuff—dat's the limit. I'm glad your fadder is dead, he shouldn't lif to know about such a disgrace . . . mine daughter brung home by the poliz—an' the neighbors seen it. And all mine life I shalved to be decent and to brung up mine children they should be decent . . . an' now this! Now—"

"But, Mother—let me explain—I—"

"Exshplain nodding . . . get out o' here—get out o' mine house before the liddle ones see you an' get shpoiled from you—out—out, or by golly, I chuck you out—out—OUT!"

The first rays of the sickly April sun were streaking through the dingy windows of the rear flat. Jane pulled herself up with what strength remained in her slight, harassed body, and what spirit still flickered in her harried soul. It was good-by—she realized that; even if her mother should relent, she, herself, would not—now. There was a strain of pride in Jane which had trickled through from somewhere back in the ancestry of her father, the fiddling barber.

There was nothing now to do except say her farewells to her little sisters and her brother. She loved them and they worshiped her.

Jane fought back the tears as she crossed with faltering steps to the living-room, where the girls slept. She awoke them and told them she was going away—far away—for a long time. They were sleepy. They didn't grasp what it meant. They

wanted to go back to sleep. Jane didn't expect them to appreciate the tragedy—she was rather glad they didn't.

She threw the few things she owned into her telescope. She bethought herself for a flash of where she was going, what she was going against, and with what—with three cents. She still had the three coppers.

She smiled grimly, gamely . . . then she smiled even more broadly, for Jane had a sense of drama. She turned and gave to each of the children a penny. They beamed and crooned—they got few in the ordinary course of their lives. They kissed her again, and with the tokens of their gratitude on her cheeks, she walked softly forth, put her key on the kitchen table, closed the door silently behind her, crept down the stairs and down the long, unpaved alley between houses, and stood facing—Fate.

Alone—on Peoria Street—without a cent!

About a mile west of that street is a little spot of green called Union Park. Jane walked that way, instead of toward the center of the city, aimlessly, for she had no more definite destination than an untied toy balloon. In the bit of park she sat down on a bench to rest. Sleepy men were scraping by, walking to their early tasks. Homeless hobos were waking up on the benches, where they had spent the night. The big town was beginning to stretch and rub its eyes for a new day, another day in the mortal grind of work and worry.

A street-car conductor, in uniform, dragged by. A boy delivering morning papers, trundling a home-made cart that carried his goods, passed, whistling. Jane watched them with emotions half of heavy despair and half of buoyant relief, for, while she was as homeless as the unwashed vagrants who were yawning on the benches and the grass about her, she was free.

Yes, she was free. Free to go where she wished. She hadn't a place in the world to go, but she was free to go there. And she knew that wherever she should decide to go, she had better go quickly, because she was penniless and hungry and must find a place to sleep that night.

SHE called to the newsboy. In her shabby handbag she had an imitation gold pin. She showed it to the lad and offered it to him for a morning paper. He jumped at the bargain. Jane turned to the "Help Wanted—Female." There were columns of domestic situations, but Jane had decided to leave those for a last resort. She felt too emancipated to go back into household service. As long as she had her pick, well, she didn't know just what she might hope or expect to find, but she wanted something more romantic than nursemaid-ing.

Her eyes roved up and down until they stopped at the classification: "Professional." There the very first item, indented and standing out in semi-display, held her—

WANTED—Girls, white, to go to South America as entertainers in high-grade cabaret; experience unnecessary; must sing and dance; big pay, great prospects for attractive young girls; transportation both ways, and room and board during engagement furnished; must be ready to depart within forty-eight hours.

The address to which applicants were directed was of an office in the "Loop," an agency for theatricals.

Jane's eyes opened wide. Why not? Here was a heavenly suggestion. South

America! She had never even been to South Chicago. Cabaret! She had never seen one except through an open door from the sidewalk, and all those she had known about were blowzy dens. But it sounded intriguing. She had a fair parlor voice and had picked up the ordinary dance-steps of the day on the streets. "Experience unnecessary," eh? Why not?

Downtown was two miles away. She didn't cotton to the necessity of hiking it, hauling her belongings. But an idea came—

Along Madison Street, nearby, were a number of second-hand shops. She found one and stood outside until the keeper came along and opened up. She dumped the contents of her telescope on the counter. The man examined the scanty, cheap pieces of her apparel and offered her a dollar for the lot. She took it without haggling, and walked forth with a crumpled "ace" between her and her future, but otherwise stripped of all earthly goods save what she wore.

SHE breakfasted in a quick-lunch beanery and took a street-car for the business district. She found the office in a second-class building on Van Buren Street. It hadn't opened yet. She sat on the steps, in the hall, until a little grey-haired, rat-faced man came along and unlocked the door. She followed him in. He looked up, inquiringly; she said she was answering his ad. He looked her over more searchingly, asked her some questions, smiled, and said:

"Oh, you'll do, all right. You're just the type . . . say, them greasers'll go cookoo over a li'l pip like you. You'll prob'ly grab off some rich coffee planter for yourself. How old are you?"

Jane said she was eighteen—which was stretching it by three years.

The man gave her a slip and told her to take it around the corner to a building he pointed out from the window, and to ask for Mrs. Barney. Jane found it to be a hotel, a smelly and sinister looking place. There was a table in a corner, behind which sat an old, worn clerk. She asked for Mrs. Barney. The aged clerk shot her a swift glance, started as though to say something, stopped and shrugged his bony shoulders, and directed her upstairs to a room at the end of the far hall.

As Jane told it to me, she later learned that this was a notorious white-slavery station operated by two men named McCarthy and Duval, as a roundup and clearing house for girls coming from and going to all parts of the world. Mrs. Barney and McCarthy and Duval were among the first to be indicted and prosecuted, later, when the Mann Act, introduced by a congressman from Illinois, was passed to do away with just such places and just such practises.

She, of course, knew nothing of the character of the place or the woman then. Dingy surroundings were no danger signal to her—she had been born and reared among them.

And, as it turned out, this enterprise was one of the least nefarious of Mrs. Barney's deals. She was organizing a flock of young girls to send to Buenos Aires, to work and mingle in a water-front café. Naturally, the girls were expected to waive prudish scruples. Their prosperity depended upon the favors of the men patrons, tourists and sailors and natives. But it was not out-and-out bondage. Girls could go through it and survive in reasonable respectability.

Mrs. Barney was having her breakfast in the large living-room of her apartment in the hotel when Jane entered. She was a big, beefy woman, coarse and swarthy. She shot a routine of inquiries at the girl, licked her lips and her fingers, reached for a paper and told Jane to sign. Then she

got another, with many blanks filled in already, and told her to sign that.

"You're a citizen of Canada, your name is Carmen Carrington, you're twenty-two years old," directed Mrs. Barney. "I got a passport all made out with them specifications. You can't get a passport on your own. But it's all signed, sealed and delivered. After you get to Buenos Aires you can take your own monicker—this is just for gettin' out o' this country an' in Argentia. Nobody'll bother you after that."

"Yes, ma'am," said Jane.

"You'll like the work there. A smart girl can lay herself up a bankroll. Some o' them Argentinian chumps is richer than a bank, an' they go wild over good-lookin' young American babies like you. You'll room upstairs over the café an' get your meals free. You'll get ten bucks a week besides, an' what you can pick up—that's up to you. You can go as far as you like, or you can be a sap an' die poor down there—get me?"

Jane didn't understand it very clearly, but she nodded.

"Now, I'll get you put up here till we blow for New Orleans t'morrow night. There'll be a couple o' dozen girls. I'll be with you to see you off. You'll all have first-class cabins on the ship an' I'll stake you to a few bucks in advance. I s'pose you're flat—most all of 'em is.

"Now, you ain't to leave this house till we start. You signed a paper givin' me authority over you—that's in your own name an' it's legal. So no changin' your mind, see? Come along with me; I'll get fixed up here."

Mrs. Barney took Jane to one of a dozen rooms on an upper floor, all opening into each other, with two and three beds in each, and told her she would be housed there.

As the morning progressed, numerous girls joined her. They were all older, some were hard and boisterous. One, a bleached blonde with gold teeth, whose name was Babe Clahanan, who slung the lingo of the Saturday night dance-halls, vised Jane for an hour before she called her into one of the end rooms and sat her down.

"Hey, kid," she said, "how old are you?"

"I'm twenty-two," answered Jane. "An' I'm a Chinaman. Cut the stallin' with me. I'm your friend. Come clean. How old are you?"

Jane was silent.

"You're just about fifteen or sixteen. An' you look like a clean boob. Now, I don't s'pose you ever been in the Tropics. No? Well, I have. An' I'm pretty near old enough to be your mother."

"Now, listen to me, youngster. There ain' nothin' left o' me that's worth savin'. But you got most o' your mistakes ahead o' you yet."

I DON' wanna boss you or run your life. But I don' want you to throw all you got in the pot blindfolded as well as dumb. I don't believe you know much about what you're goin' against.

"This ain' the first trip I've started under the wing o' Mrs. Barney, who, by the way, would cut you into Hamburger steak an' peddle you by the pound. If I wanna do a return after what South America done to me, that's my business. But it turns my insides to think of a baby like you who don' know what it's all about—this or nothin' else much—bein' flimflammed into goin' that far into that racket, with any phoney notions about what she's steppin' into."

"What that old safe-blower, Mrs. Barney, told you, is true—in a way. You can battle to keep yourself fairly on the up-an'-up in the life you're gonna live. But it's a thousand to one against you."

"Besides that you're gonna brush up against a lot o' half-breeds an' seamen



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an' tipsy tourists a long way from home an' mother an' out on the good-an'-loose, an' live among the gamblers an' dive-keepers an' the rest o' the port riffraff.

"If you can get past the silk-lined greasers an' the money-tossin' travelers on the one hand, an' fight off the rough workers around you in the life on the other—well, if you can, an' I ain't never seen one yet what did—if you can, I say, then what's the use o' goin' in the firs' place?

"For ten bucks a week an' room an' board, to hustle all night an' yodel your lungs out an' dance with ev'ry hunkie what's got the price of a beer, which is one thing you ain't got no option against doin'—then what's the use o' goin' to South America? You can do that right here in Chi.

"An' here you might meet some nice boy in your own class an' get married an' be fixed for the rest o' your life. Down there they don't talk that line. They see you in a dump an' they peg you for a fly moll an' if they find out diff'rent they don't soften—they jus' get sore. If you do go through that mill an' come out the way you went in, which I say ain't hardly in the cards, where are you? What've you gained? At best you're where you started an' you've thrum away a couple o' years o' your life.

"An' I say it's bound to mark you. There's something about them garlic-smellin' Tropics what gets in your system, an' as much as you hate 'em, you keep always wantin' to go back to 'em, somehow. Look at me. Buenos Aires broke me, body an' soul. I went down there first when I was seventeen, a pretty straight-shootin' kid from Minneapolis, where I used to wait on table in a boardin'-house.

"I cleaned up a couple o' thousan' dollars down there an' sold my heart's blood for it. Then I shot it off against a crooked roulette wheeler an' a prize-fighter I thought I was stuck on. I beat it back to the States. I swore I didn't ever wanna go South o' Milwaukee again as long as I lived. In six months I was back in the Argentine. I went through the works again. This is my sixth trip down there.

"An' if you wanna step into this—all right. I ain't in the business o' competin' with the Salvation Army. But somethin' inside o' me says it's up to me to wise you up a little out o' what I know that you don't know an' can't understand yet.

"Now, this is what it amounts to:

"Don't pay no attention to what Mrs. Barney says about you bein' signed up, becuz what you signed ain't worth the paper you signed on. You're a minor an' you're goin' on a crooked passport, an' the gal is in so Dutch anyhow with the local police an' fed'ral men that she can't stand for a squawk. I can't get you out o' here, becuz, as I told you, I got the Argentine fever an' I'm busted, an' there ain't no chance for me to make it unless Mrs. Barney stakes me.

I AIN'T got enough gumption left, between the way life's treated me an' a few habits what have got me by the throat, to stand up for other people no more, even when what I got left of a conscience gnaws at me.

"But you can make it, yourself, if you put up a spunky fight.

"An' my advice to you, little kid, which I slip you like I would if you was my own young sister, is to pull out o' this as fast an' as far an' as quick as you can, before you get in up to your neck an' start goin' the way that makes girls like you turn into women like me."

It came as a shock and a horror to Jane.

Despite the tawdry surroundings, the obvious character of Mrs. Barney and the girls who were to be her traveling and

working companions, she had nursed the drooping and fading dream that she was launched on a great adventure, an exciting trip into new and colorful and fantastic worlds.

She had acted impulsively, as is the way of youth. The thought of going far away had been denatured of its bitterness because she had been thrown out of home, because there still burned within her the searing hurts of her humiliating and torturing disappointment in her first love.

But Babe's talk shook her up.

It wasn't an alluring picture that the well-meaning old-timer had drawn before her eyes.

SHE squeezed Babe's thin arm in a silent gesture of appreciation, drew herself up, and started for the door. But it was locked. She tried several doors. They were all locked. She pounded on the last one. Several of the girls crowded about her and asked what was wrong. She cried out that she wanted to go. They assured her Mrs. Barney wouldn't stand for it.

Just then the door opened, and Mrs. Barney, herself, with two new girls, came in.

"What's all the noise about?" she demanded.

Jane stood before her.

"I want to get away from here," she cried.

"Oh, you do? Well, it's cold. You signed a paper. You ain't gonna make no fool out o' me. What do you think I'm in business for—to pass the time away? You come here of your own free will, you signed up, an' you're goin'," barked the woman.

"I don't want to go," protested Jane. "The paper is no good. I'm under age. You open that door."

"Or what? I told you, you're goin' through wit' this. Now shut up an' behave yourself. You got a dose o' cold feet, is all. You'll get over it."

Mrs. Barney unlocked the door and started out. Jane tried to slip through, past her.

Suddenly she felt herself reeling and staggering backward, a dazing something numbing her brain. Mrs. Barney, her fist clenched, stood with her broad back against the door.

"Now, another peep out o' you, Miss Fresh," she yelled, "an' I'll knock you into the middle o' next week. Don't you try rough-housin' me, or I'll break your neck."

Jane, holding her jaw, where Mrs. Barney's closed hand had struck her a brutal blow, her head ringing and her heart sunk, dropped her chin.

"I thought so," sneered Mrs. Barney. "You ain't such a wildcat. Most of 'em get some sense when it's knocked into 'em. Now don't let me hear no more o' your blabbin' nonsense. We sail from New Orleans Sunday. We pull out on the nine-forty t'morrow night for there. An' when I say 'we,' I mean all of us—an' that goes for you, Miss Carmen Carrington of Canada."

And Mrs. Barney walked out and locked the door behind her.

Jane sank down on the floor, against the wall, blubbering.

Never a girl of strong character, built or developed to make resistance, even against her own promptings, she was easily "licked."

The single blow had unnerved her, as it has done to many a man as well as weakling girls. A sinking—sunken—sensation made her limp and spent. She wept softly in little gulps. Several of the girls surrounded her sympathetically. They had little more courage or resolution than she, herself.

"It's no use," sobbed Jane. "I'm not going to fight. I can't. I fought last night—for the first time in my whole life.

I won—and I lost the only thing I ever saw that meant anything to me.

"I guess I was wrong. I should have let him—let him have his way.

"If I did get out of here I wouldn't have any place to go. So maybe what I'd go up against might be worse than what I'm headed for with the rest of you. Who knows?"

"I'll go. I wish we were leaving right this minute. I'm ready."

"That's the way to talk," chimed one of the older girls. "You're gonna do good down in the Argentine. Wait till them olive-skinned banana-kings take a slant at you. You've a good-lookin' baby-face. . . Gee, I wish I had your youth an' looks—with what I know."

SURE," added another. "You're runnin' from shadows. You'll be wild about it down there—an' that fine boat-ride, an' ev'rything. It's the chant of a lifetime. I been there."

Babe Clananan was in the next room, facing the wall, weeping.

She sniffed there, alone, long after Jane had reconciled herself to go along the path of least resistance and succumb to the coward's spineless excuse—"I couldn't help it."

So, Jane, with the rest of the girls and Mrs. Barney, took the flyer next night for the South.

What doubts and scruples our heroine still had, and what pangs she felt at leaving the city of her birth and her mother and her sisters and brother, were swallowed up in the new experiences of riding on a train, sleeping in a Pullman, eating in a diner—for the girls traveled in tiptop style.

A night in New Orleans was a dizzy whirl of stimulating sensations. Then the big liner, the first Jane had ever seen, and the white cabins and the myriad curious things, all fresh and interesting to an inland child bound on a great excursion into an unknown clime and an untried life.

The trip was uneventful (except that every moment of it was an event to Jane. She had never been anywhere, had never seen anything except what seemed about her on Peoria Street and the brief glimpses of wealth and superiority in the home and service of the Pettigrews.

Long afterward, as she told me of that voyage; long afterward, when she had served her season in the fastest resort of international rounders and spenders in South America; long afterward, when she had served her 1,001 nights on Broadway in the zippiest shows and the niftiest night-clubs; long afterward, as she lay sick in my bed in my little apartment, cracked under the strain of the life she had started so early and had kept at so steadily—even then, as she described it to me, I could see in her eyes the soft glimmer of the poor, weak, shabby girl, trouping off with that gang of gold-diggers and jezebels, for a South American port to become an inmate of a gilded, tropical, seaport drinking dive and dancing den.

WHAT she went through there I shall relate further in my next chapter. For the interim we will leave her there, fifteen years old, innocent, woefully inexperienced, pitifully reaching for the happiness in such a situation that should have been hers under normal circumstances in her own home, in school, with nice girl companions.

Picture it, that half-woman, thrown to the champagne-guzzling Latins, the pleasure-obsessed tourists, the leering lowclass natives, the sinister degenerates of that wide-open tropical underworld—not only in it, but of it!

[To be continued in February issue]

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Part Music and Part Tears

[Continued from page 41]

and feel that big arm that's as hard as a piece of wood about you, and it seems like he was a real giant. Maybe there's some people in the world stronger than my daddy, but I don't believe it.

After Daddy had gone Mother cried, and that night she told me to tell the visitors that came in that she was sick in bed and couldn't see them. I went in and laid down side of her in the dark, and put my arm around her trying to let her know that I loved her, but she didn't seem to notice me.

That was the last I saw of Daddy for a long time. He didn't write after that. He'd send an envelope with one of those blue checks in it once in a while, but there wouldn't be any letter.

I can't tell how that hurt me. It seemed so sort of strange and unlike my Daddy. When my birthday came he sent me an envelope, and I just cried with happiness when I saw the envelope with my Daddy's writing on the outside; but when I opened it there wasn't anything inside except one of those blue slips of paper. Mother said it was for me to get a present with, but I felt as though I'd like to tear it up. I didn't want money. I wanted a letter from my daddy, and I wanted to see him. It was ages and ages since I'd sat in his lap.

Poor Daddy! I guess he'd come to the point where he thought all his family wanted from him was money. Of course Mother knew best as far as she was concerned, and I couldn't make any suggestions to her; but with me it was different, and I didn't want to have my Daddy drift away like that.

I TOOK Daddy's check to bed with me that night and cried myself to sleep so that there were tear stains all over the blue paper, and then I didn't dare to take it to the bank and cash it for fear the man at the window would laugh at me when he saw those tear stains. So I put the check away with some of my other treasures. I didn't know where Daddy was, so I couldn't write to him. Mother didn't know where he was. If she did she wouldn't tell.

After a while I got so I didn't feel so bad about that check. It had my name written on it by my very own Daddy, and I'd take it out sometimes and read it, and kiss where Daddy had written. It was all I had to show that Daddy was thinking of me.

I thought a lot about Daddy, but I didn't say much about him. Mother didn't like to mention his name, and I didn't want to hurt her. I knew Mother needed me and needed my love. I think she got to understand this herself, because she'd strain me to her sometimes and burst out crying. Knowing Mother as I did, I had to be awful careful not to say anything that would hurt her; but it was dreadfully hard to be loyal to both her and Daddy, particularly when I loved Daddy so much, and it hurt me so bad not seeing him any more.

Sometimes when I'd go to visit one of my girl friends and her daddy would be home, sitting down reading the paper, or joking with the girl's mother, I'd just want to sit and watch him and think about my own daddy. And when that girl's daddy would take me up in his lap and start talking with me or asking me questions, I'd feel like crying.

The next time I saw Daddy I felt funny. I couldn't talk to him the way I wanted to. I was getting to be a big girl, and I knew what I wanted to say, but somehow I couldn't talk to Daddy the way I used to. I knew what I wanted to let him know, but it wasn't anything you could say in words. It was just a sort of a feeling, a

great big something that made a lump in my heart, something that was part music and part tears.

Daddy didn't offer to take me on his lap, and I couldn't go over and sit with him without his asking me. That was a strange feeling, too. When I'd been smaller I'd run right over to him and climb up in his lap and throw my arms around his neck and be so happy; but now I felt that I couldn't do it unless he wanted me to; and he acted as though he wanted me to but couldn't ask me. I was just miserable.

Daddy said he'd come to talk with Mother about some property, and he told her he had a chance to sell it and told her the price. It seems that the judge had given Mother a half interest in the property, and Daddy had to get her to join with him in making a sale.

MOTHER said she'd sell, and Daddy said he'd come back in a few days with the papers; then he got up and smiled and bowed just like he was a visitor. I was afraid he'd bow to me and I couldn't have stood that, so I ran out of the room and didn't say good-by to him at all.

Mother was feeling bad, too. For quite a long time she'd been having blue fits. I'd try to cheer her up, but there wasn't much I could do. There were hard little lines of disappointment under her eyes, and her mouth had a droop at the corners. She was lonesome in spite of all her friends, and when she looked at Daddy I'd seen a little, hungry look in her eyes, like she felt toward Daddy just like I did, only she couldn't say anything. Daddy didn't seem to notice. For all he's so smart he doesn't seem able to understand Mother. I guess men are different, and they don't feel those things that are part music and part tears.

It was nearly Christmas. Mother didn't want to have a tree. She said she felt too tired to bother with it. Mother was nearly always tired then. She seemed to have lost interest in life. Even when there would be friends visiting her she couldn't seem to shake off the gloom clouds and be bright and happy. She wasn't blue so much as she simply didn't take an interest in things.

I thought it would do Mother good to have a tree, so I told her I was going to get one and tend to it myself. She didn't make any objections, just smiled at me and said I always was a queer girl.

Christmas Eve wasn't very exciting. I had the little tree all lit up, and I'd made Mother go in the other room while I put the presents on the tree. Mother was making believe she was interested just for my sake, but she was just putting it on.

Then, just as I'd finished with all the lights and decorations, there came a ring at the bell, and when I went to the door, there stood Daddy.

IS MOTHER in, Edith? I've got the papers for her to sign, and they've got to be in escrow within the next two days. . . . Hello! You've got your tree all lit up. I didn't want to disturb you. . . .

I reached out and took his hand and led him into the room.

"You come right on in and sit down by the tree. I'm all ready to give out presents and I'm not going to let you talk business until afterwards. I'll go get Mother."

Mother hadn't heard Daddy come in. She was lying down on the couch in her room, waiting for me to call her. She'd put on her best dress and was all fixed up in her prettiest. She'd wanted me to know how she appreciated my going to the work of getting the tree all ready.

"All right, Mother. Come and see what



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dear old Santa Claus has brought you." Mother pretended to be excited, and she gave a little scream and jumped up and ran into the room, and there sat Daddy right in front of the tree . . . I hadn't thought of it just that way.

Daddy jumped up and stood there, looking at Mother, and his arms came open, and somehow Mother just ran right into them. I just stood there blinking, and then, after a minute, Daddy just reached out and scooped me in right close to him and Mother . . . and there wasn't any tears any more, just music . . . somehow our souls all seemed to sing with happiness so I could almost hear the music.

It was funny, the way it had all happened so quick, and how I'd just happened to say what I did, and Daddy'd just happened to come that night and be sitting right there . . . maybe it wasn't so funny after all. Maybe it was really Santa Claus that did it, and I'd just helped him.



Absent Without Leave

[Continued from page 52]

apparently, and he glowed with much pride.

"Bet you a month's pay I am. Know any place around here a man can buy or steal a real honest-to-goodness dinner?" he asked.

"No, I don't. But you might chase around the village and scrape up some eggs and other things and then get some motherly old madame to cook your meal." "You got the right dope," he answered. "But I can't seem to make these natives understand their own language."

"Let the corporal do your parley-vousing. He speaks French fluently," suggested a girl whose name was Chick.

As we all strolled out to the streets of Souilly, the sun was sinking behind the tumbling hills of historic Verdun. In the gathering shadows there seemed little chance that any trouble-making American officer would discover the nurses hobnobbing with four American enlisted men which was against orders. So, in pairs we drifted down the street toward the hospital outside Souilly. Marie and I were last of all. We walked slowly, for I did not want our parting to arrive until the very last moment.

I'd like to see you tonight, Marie," I began, using her first name as if I had known her a long time.

"But you expect the battery to go into position tonight, don't you?"

"Perhaps. We expected the same thing last night. I'll be willing to take the chance of going absent without leave, however, to see you. I have never done such a thing before, but this is a different case."

"Why different?" demanded the girl.

"Oh, I don't know just why. It is different, that's all," I evaded.

"I wouldn't like to be the cause of your getting into trouble," Marie said.

"Forget that part of it. Can I see you tonight?" I insisted.

"Yes—" she answered. "Meet me in front of the barracks marked permissionaires on the hospital road at eight o'clock."

"Oui," I answered in my fragmentary French. "I'll be there rain or shine."

We were only a short distance from the hospital. Somehow I suspected Marie wanted our date kept secret, so I said good-

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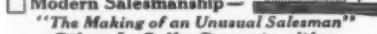
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by to her as if only some good luck would ever bring us together again.

* * * * *

"I didn't have the slightest idea you would come in this wicked weather," I said, advancing through the downpour of rain to meet the slender figure shrouded in an army slicker and sou'wester hat.

"I didn't want you to take a chance of being A. W. O. L. for nothing," she explained. "Do you think your battery will go into position tonight? From things I heard around the hospital we're making preparations here to take care of a lot of cases. That's the way it always is before the boys go into action."

"No, absolutely sure they won't, tonight," I declared, in an effort to lessen what seemed to be some fear of my getting into trouble on her account.

"Where the deuce can we go in this flood?" I asked, sort of hopelessly.

"Well, we can't be seen standing around the hospital grounds together. Some busybody will report me for being with you. There's nothing to do but go to a dugout."

"Dugout?" I echoed, uncomprehendingly. "What do you mean?"

"Why—we have plenty of wonderful dugouts here for our own protection in case of a raid. We're only seven kilometers from the front—and not out of range of the big guns."

Arm in arm, Marie acting as pilot, we moved cautiously through the darkness and sweeping rain to a rendezvous of her own choice.

"I can't find the electric switch, so we will have to sit in the dark," she told me after three minutes of search.

"Suits me; I am not afraid of the dark," I rejoined, as we sat down very close to each other.

"Well, this beats the Dutch," I declared, breaking the period of silence.

"What are you talking about?"

"Why, this situation of course. I never dreamed I'd ever be sitting in a dark dugout in France with an American girl."

"Maybe you don't dream enough—"

"I have dreamed quite a good deal in my life—especially about a girl with sort of violet shadowed eyes and dark curly hair—but my dreams never came anywhere's near being true until this strange and extraordinary day—"

"What do you mean, strange and extraordinary?" cut in Marie.

"Well, look at what's happened to me. For the first time since coming to France I met you—an American girl—and here we are on the first night of our meeting together under the very nose of the German guns. Nothing like this could happen back in America, could it? You know, I don't believe things happen like this unless there is a big reason. Do you?"

BUT being a woman, Marie Clermont did not answer this question directly. Instead she put the question back to me.

"If you think there is such a reason, why don't you explain it to me?" she demanded.

"I can and I can't," I replied seriously enough. Suddenly my hand touched Marie's. She did not try to take it away and my fingers closed over hers. I thrilled at the touch. Then, realizing what I was doing and fearful of rebuke—although she made no motion to release her imprisoned fingers—I freed her hand.

Slowly I tried to give her my version of our being together in a dugout. My attempt swept both of us back to grim fields through which I had passed to reach this moment—fields of waving wheat above Chateau-Thierry—fields where machine gun fire had almost sent me down the long trail of a soldier's last adventure with the regret that the War had got me before

Life had let me taste the full sweets of romance. For I told Marie Clermont there in the dugout the honest truth. I had never been in love in all my life!

Then my telling took us to that moment when I lay in a hospital near Meaux, praying silently for dawn and daylight and life. I had not wanted death without love.

"Back there in the hospital when they said I would be as good as new in a couple of weeks I wondered if I was being saved for some purpose. I had wondered the same thing many times before as buddies went down around me with a last word on their lips. Marie, it has taken today and you to make me sure that some good Fate has kept me carrying on for this moment. I believe that we are together tonight because of this Fate," I concluded.

Again there was a spell of silence broken only by the muttering of the guns beyond Souilly. At last she began speaking, her soft voice a wistful, tender thing in the dark:

"When I first saw you in the French store today I liked you, Al. Even then I hoped that somehow I would see you again. So, now, I'm glad that Fate, or something, brought us together here."

BUT, I was only one dirty, ragged soldier out of thousands such as you see every day. How could you know you liked me, then? How could—"

"A woman knows when she's going to like a man—especially if she's my kind. You see, Al, I've always had a definite idea of what I liked and wanted in life. Maybe you'll think I'm old-fashioned and terribly romantic when I tell you this, but it's true, nevertheless.

"Of course it was patriotism, and a desire to do my bit that prompted me to become an Army nurse. But, it was something else, too. Don't smile, Al, when I confess the truth. It—was a sort of hope that—a silly girl's dream, I guess you'll call it—that some day I would nurse a soldier who would turn out to be my dream man. Are you smiling at me in the dark for being so romantic?"

"Smiling, Marie? Do you really want to know what I'm doing—"

"What are you doing, Al?" she asked.

"I'm wishing you'd been my nurse back there at Meaux—I'm wishing I'll get sent back from this front to—to—your hospital—just for the chance of—"

"Al!" Her voice ran into a strange muffled little sound after she interrupted me. And her hands grazed over mine, stealing away before I could take them. Then once again her voice reached me. "Please—please—don't say such a thing. I've seen so many of the boys brought back from hell—heard so many of them in their agony. Oh! I could not bear to think of your being wounded again—"

"Well, never mind then, Marie. I won't wish anything like that if it upsets you. As a matter of fact," I went on, trying to put a little razzle-dazzle in my voice that had grown so serious all of a sudden, "there isn't a chance of my getting hit again. I've had mine. I won't get it again—"

"That's what you all say, Al. But, oh! Let's not think of that one thing any more. Let's talk about—"

"About you, Marie," I suggested, eager to learn more of what was in her dreams. "There's very little to be said about me. Tell me about yourself, Al, when you were back there—home."

"You mean there's very little about yourself that you care to tell the first night you've met me. Is that it, Marie?" I asked.

"As if to prove my words utterly wrong, Marie Clermont opened her heart to me. She told me of her girlhood, and a vision came that made me blurt out how sorry I was not to have always known her.

"But, if you had known me then we wouldn't be here together in the midst of War—"

"No; but, maybe I'd be getting letters from you, Marie—letters that would drive away the loneliness that comes into our lives out yonder with the guns going, and—"

"Don't you get many letters, Al?"

"From the folks, now and then. But, it'd be different if—"

"I'd love to write to you, Al. Honest. I write to lots of the boys I've nursed at the hospital. But, I—I'll write you special letters, if you want me to."

I TOLD her I could fight the war forever and not be lonely if I was going to hear from her regularly. We sat there close to each other for a long time, neither one of us speaking. And yet, there was a lot of things I wanted to say to her, but I was afraid somehow that if I did it might break up my dream too soon. For, I had begun to dream of Marie Clermont, as a man can only dream of one woman.

"Do you know, Al, I've confided things in you I wouldn't have dared tell Chicky—or Beckly, for instance. They—they would laugh at my romantic dreams. They're so funny about such things. But, you understand—you understand, now, don't you?" she pleaded.

"Of course, I—I'll always understand you, Marie."

The guns were barking through the night. Then it was that a few strands of her brown hair were whipped against my forehead for just a fleeting second by a vagrant breeze. It was like a touch of magic. My heart seemed to be racing inside of me. Yearning mastered my arms. I would have taken Marie in my arms then and told her that I loved her if she had not suddenly broken:

"Listen, Al! A barrage! Let's go out. See, there's a star. It must have stopped raining," she said, telling me to look through the entrance of the dugout. Sure enough, one lone star drifted among the clouds outside. I seemed to be walking on air as we reached level ground, and lost all sense of where we were going. I imagined we had walked almost a kilometer through the railway yards of the hospital before realizing we had detached ourselves from shelter in spite of the threatening rain. Just as we decided to turn about, the rain-storm broke upon us.

I spotted a little third-class railway carriage coupled to a long line of flat cars. It offered snug protection and I hurried her toward it. A few minutes of fumbling with a stubborn lock and we were safe inside the tiny compartment. I slammed the door shut to keep out the rain. It locked automatically, but I did not know that then. Engrossed in conversation, neither of us paid any attention to the excited screaming of a little toy engine whistle. Nor did we notice any sensation of locomotion until the train was under a good head-speed.

GOOD Heavens!" ejaculated Marie, "this train is moving. We must get out. I will be late for the ten o'clock call to quarters, and they are so strict at the hospital now."

I immediately went to work at the door, trying to force the lock back and open it.

"Damn the thing—" I grated under my breath. "Pardon—"

"Don't mind me. Swear all you want at it. All of the boys swear when they are coming out of ether. I am getting used to it. Just open the door," she begged.

At last I twisted the lock out of the socket. The door swung open. A torrent of rain slashed our faces.

"Go away over there in the corner out of the rain," I commanded. "I'll see what the chances of getting off are." But even as she obeyed and I pushed the creaking door open, peering into the wet gloom of night, I knew it would be death for us to jump from the moving train which was now making at least twenty miles an hour. I told Marie that we would have to wait until the train stopped.

"Then what? Lord knows where we'll be when the train stops."

"Don't worry. I'll get you back to the hospital somehow," I said, relying on the hope of being able to find a Souilly-bound truck at the end of our unexpected adventure on a French ammunition train. Thirty minutes passed. The train jerked rudely a number of times and then came to an abrupt stop. Outside the carriage there were no lights visible, but upon opening the compartment door I heard Frenchmen shouting orders, and listened to feet splashing through puddles of water. I made out from snatches of the conversation overheard that we had arrived at a French ammunition dump, very near the front lines, and about fifteen kilometers from Souilly. I confided my belief to Marie.

"We'll get off here, get directions to the nearest main road to Souilly. There won't be any trouble of a truck as most of the traffic to the front takes place this time of night. You won't be awfully late getting back after all," I consoled her.

STUMBLING over boxes, shelves and a net-work of narrow gauge tracks we finally reached a boggy road. There a French sentinel halted us. I said that we were American comrades in response to his challenge. He advanced us, flashing a tiny pocket light over us to identify us as Americans. The Frog seemed surprised to see an American girl, but he gave us directions to the main route, saying that we were very near the new American artillery positions. I asked him brokenly if he knew what American regiment had moved into position. Frenchy said he thought it was the 103rd Field Artillery, but he was not sure.

"Good-night, that's my own outfit," I said aside. Then I told Marie she would soon be aboard a truck, riding toward Souilly.

But, as we plodded on, unmindful of the slush and damp chills I became more and more convinced that we were on the verge of being lost. Twenty minutes of slushing through the night and no main road rewarded our efforts.

"I'm sure we're lost, Al. It is twelve o'clock," Marie declared, anxiously turning her wrist watch up for my inspection.

"Wait a while before you think so," I admonished, but my words were spoken with a waning confidence.

Another half hour, and still no luck with the main road. Marie was not complaining. I suppose she had resigned herself to whatever was held in store. Suddenly it began to pour rain again, drenching us to the skin. A few moments later I bumped into a rise of earth and came near falling headlong through the opening of a dugout.

"Guess we had better duck in here until the storm is over," I suggested.

Marie acted upon the advice saying with a ghost of a little laugh that she was the one who was not absent without leave.

Before I could make a reply a weird whine, as if rushing air was passing directly over our heads, screamed through the silent night. Marie drew closer to me—so close until I could feel her trembling as a person does when afraid. I put my arms around her, because I knew what that whine meant.

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"What is—" Her gasping question was drowned by a deafening crash of an explosion that throttled the earth. Another shell whistled. Then the world around the dugout became crowded with the sinister sound of speeding steel. Crash!—bang!—bang! Explosions followed in quick succession. Marie huddled nearer as handfuls of dirt and gravel were thrown through the doorway by force of the bursts.

"The Germans are shelling this place," I told her. "There must be a gun position or some objective for gun-fire hereabouts." I had to shout these words in her ear as the din outside was terrible.

As if in answer to my words a lull occurred during which the sound of hurrying feet and familiar American voices shouting orders, reached me. I recognized the voices. Now, footsteps were approaching our dugout. Then a shell exploded. Quiet reigned again.

"Where in hell is Corporal Jackson," asked a voice which I recognized as that of Captain Stone, our commanding officer. "His Chief-of-Section reported him absent, sir," I heard the Top-Sergeant make answer.

Zzzz—Bang—Bang—Bang. Fearful silence followed the explosion.

"They're mighty damn close," said the Captain. "Then Jackson is A. W. O. L.—Huh!—that's funny—first time for him. Who've you got to use as gunner in his place? I received orders to return all fire." The Captain's voice dwindled away after this.

Marie had not overheard this conversation. Incoming shells had driven away her power of hearing. She was clinging to me with the fear that comes to every person under fire for the first time. I tried to reassure her, realizing I must leave and report to my gun at once. Of course, it was going to be a mighty tough job leaving Marie alone in the dugout with her fear, but my duty was plain. I knew we did not have a substitute gunner in our section.

"Marie, I've got to leave you here for a while. We accidentally stumbled upon my own battery position. They need me at my gun."

Bang!—the noise of another shell cracked against our eardrums.

"Please, don't leave me. I'll die here alone in this awful place," she cried, putting her arms around my neck.

"But the battery's going to fire and I am A. W. O. L. I heard the Captain say so. Hear that whistle?" A whistle was blowing sharply. "It means 'Stand by the guns!'" Marie, I've got to go to my piece. I am a gunner, and they need me," I told her.

I'm sure that Marie's mind emerged from the chaotic state caused by terror and that her soul rose to the needs of the moment at my words. For then she seemed to understand.

OH—YOU are going to fight—to shoot at the enemy. All right, Al. Go to your gun."

In spite of my excitement I noticed the steadiness of her voice, and when she told me that my duty was out there with the gun—and not with her—I got up and stumbled out of the dark hole. Pausing for a moment I flung a word of advice over my shoulder to the girl.

"Remain here until I come back for you. This is the safest place you can be." Then I dashed out to find my gun. I found the crew of the third section, with the exception of the gunner-corporal, standing by the piece ready to go into action.

"Who have you got to act as gunner, Sergeant?" This came from Captain Stone.

"Rigney knows the full details on this—" "Corporal Jackson reports, sir," I cut in.

"Take your post, Corporal," commanded Stone.

Twenty seconds later Sergeant Smith sang out to the executive officer: "Third section in order, sir." "Battery, one hundred rounds. F. A. shell. Charge, double zero, I. L. fuse. Fire at my command," shouted the executive officer. There was grim silence in the gun pits. Then a shell came streaming over and hit fifty yards from the first piece. Fragments rained down and stones pattered through the trees.

"Deflection—elevation 369. Fire!" came the command.

Four flashes illuminated the night shadows and four guns loosened their brass tongues of thunder. The ground rocked and the very air quivered. Our pieces bayed and roared like mad, fire-spitting animals, joining their voices in a savage unison of death that filled the woods with an infernal glamor.

Down in the oozing mire of our gun pit my gang and I worked hands-over-fists, adjusting sights, dragging ninety pound shells to the tray and ramming them home. Several months in the lines, under all kinds of fire and through many gas attacks, had made us all indifferent to such fire.

So, we worked on, oblivious to the Hun missiles which came tearing over, spilling their contents of death dangerously near. An explosion, more terrific than any previous one, shook the entire vicinity of the battery position. After the crash of bursting steel and iron ended agonized human cries came from the throats of suffering men. Piteous pleas for aid filled the night. Above the groans a voice racked by pain called out.

FIRST piece out of order, sir," A fit of coughing followed this report.

Spare men and the two Sanitary Corps men hurried to the pit of the first section where the shell had landed, demolishing the cannon and tearing the crew to lifeless human wrecks. Everything was being accomplished heedless of the shells that were coming in. Trees were smashed and chewed to bits, earth was thrown in the air, rocks and tree branches mingled with the shell splinters that rained down.

"Second section out of order, sir," shouted the chief of that section. His gunner had reported that the bore would not stand another shot. The piece had been recommended for the repair shop two weeks before.

"Second section, abandon your piece. Take cover!" ordered the executive officer, crowding data for the third and fourth pieces on top of this command.

My crew was still putting them over when fragments from a shell that ruined the fourth section, knocked my number seven and three men down. Shorthanded we kept the hot "155" howitzer going.

Captain Stone rushed into the pit. "You men take shelter. Your gun's the only one left in action."

"Please, Cap'n, we'll stick here. Just shoot the dope along," I begged. The answer barely escaped his lips before a shell made a direct hit on the tree behind us. I sank to the ground, trying to stifle a moan. Other men fell near me. The Captain, untouched, raised my head on his knee, commanding the man next to us to get Bacon and Marsh, the first-aid men.

"Both of them are down, sir, hit by a shell. The boys are having a hell of a time trying to fix up the wounded themselves."

"My God!" groaned the Captain, tearing away my blouse to get at the wound which had ripped a hole in my back.

"Captain, Captain," I called feebly. Stone bent over me. "There's a girl over in the dugout to the right of the first section gun—she's—she's an American nurse—explain later—please go see, sir, that she's safe." My voice suddenly began to trail away.

"Johnson, hold Jackson's head and bind his wound until I come back," ordered the C. O., turning to a man who sat in the midst of the torture puffing wildly at a cigarette like some sort of grotesque thing.

"Can't touch him," he shouted, blowing a mouthful of smoke after his jerky words. "God have mercy on me," he kept repeating between inhalations. The fellow's nerve was shot. Like myself, the Captain had seen lots of others in the same fix. Shell-shocked, they called it back at the hospital.

THEN the Captain ordered Lieutenant Malone to find Marie, quickly returning his attention to me.

Lieutenant Malone found her in the dugout on her knees, according to what he told me later. He said she was strangely calm until told that I had been hit.

"I'm going to him," she had insisted.

Malone tried to keep her in the dugout, but, according to him, she said her duty was with the wounded and she escaped his restraining hands and made him lead her to where Captain Stone was trying to bind up my wounds. She took the bandage roll out of Stone's clumsy fingers as she whispered:

"Al—boy—I came all the way to France for this!"

A tongue of fire leaped from another bursting shell and shot the shadows with crimson light. And in that moment I saw Marie bending over some of the boys in the second section gun pit. They told me later that my buddies could do little but marvel at the coolness and courage of the slender American girl as she bound up their broken comrades—and that the men whose wounds she swabbed with iodine and swathed in bandages stood their torture with very little wincing, believing that some unknown angel ministered to them. At last, when she had finally taken care of all the wounded, Marie returned to me.

"Al, how are you standing it?" she asked with a trembling tone.

"Guess I'll pull through," I answered slowly, my sufferings not so intense after she took my hands in her own. The noise of whining shells and crashing explosives became strangely hushed to my ears as Marie murmured things sweetly incoherent in my ears.

THE ambulances came, and they began lifting the boys on stretchers for an agonizing ride over shell-gutted roads. Before they came for me I heard Captain Stone demanding Marie's name and hospital address. Also, I heard the driver informing them that the hospital she mentioned was the one to which we were going.

During the long hour of bumping, shaking and toiling that elapsed before the ambulance reached the receiving ward with its groaning burdens, Marie sat close to my litter, her hands ever ready to comfort me with a caress. When they lifted my litter out of the ambulance, consciousness left me.

Ward 32 was exceptionally quiet. The day nurse had just taken my temperature and found my fever declining. Beyond the great open windows the world of Indian summer teamed with golden sunshine. A happy bird song from the garden floated through the ward. I saw the sunshine and heard the bird's song, then sighed longingly as I returned my gaze to the ward door, which I watched as if momentarily

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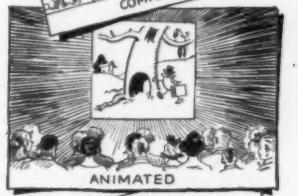
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I should stay there, and not even Buddy could drag me from my pedestal of shame. I refused to notice Buddy for the time, and was rewarded a few minutes later by having the poor infant come back to the kitchen with the message:

"Uncle wants Fritzi."

There was nothing to do but go. I couldn't get to Lil's room to change my clothes without encountering the creature, and I might as well carry out my pose. I wasn't very respectful in manner, I imagine, as I stood there in the doorway waiting for him to turn and speak to me.

"I'm sorry to appear to criticize as soon as I arrive," he began with a commendable effort toward politeness. "Buddy says your name is Fritzi, so perhaps I may call you that. I have to ask you, Fritzi, not to let Buddy play in the water. I happen to know Mrs. Armour does not like it, and would be greatly annoyed to know that you let him. Please see that it doesn't happen again. Will you change his clothes?"

He asked it not as a question but as an assumption, and not trusting myself to respond I took the child's hand and marched across the living-room toward the sleeping wing. Buddy must have wondered in the depths of his small brain what had come over me, for I changed his clothes with never a word and I was none too gentle.

DON'T you get wet again," I whispered fiercely as I let him go. Then seized with an inspiration I added wickedly, "If you do your uncle may spank you."

If Buddy must be ruled by the iron hand, it was going to be his hand, not mine.

I managed a respectable lurch, after so long a time.

"You goin' to eat, Fritzi?" the cherub demanded as I tied his bib.

"Not now, honey," I whispered and fled to the kitchen to avoid further questions.

I had unearthed a faded gingham of Lil's which I hoped Buddy would refrain from recognizing, and picked out the most nondescript apron I could find. Every vestige of curl was gone from my hair and I had plastered it close to my face. My best friend would never have recognized me at first encounter, and poor Buddy kept eyeing me askance as if he wanted to poke me to make sure I was real.

We got through the day somehow, and by evening my saving sense of humour had got into the situation enough to carry me along with better grace. I began to enjoy being treated with condescension, picturing the gentleman's chagrin when Lil should return and he learned my real status—not of course in my presence, for I fully intended to fade out the minute Lil turned up. But behind the amusement of the thing I still had enough irritation toward fate in general and this creature in particular for having contrived to get me into such a muddle. There was no sympathy for him in my attitude, nothing but contemptuous amusement and ruffled pride.

After I put Buddy to bed that night, the officious relative undertook no further supervision beyond reminding me that if I intended to sleep in the same room with the child I should see to it that the windows were open but that the boy should not sleep in a draft. I felt myself fizzing inside as I bowed my acquiescence to that.

Next morning things went a bit better. At eleven, Uncle Ed took Buddy uptown for a walk, and slipping into my suit and cramping my hat down on my glazed bob I dashed out to market. If Uncle Ed couldn't know I had brains and an education in any other arts he was going to know that I could cook, even though I could more heartily have poisoned him than fed him.

Lunch was a success, and after it my



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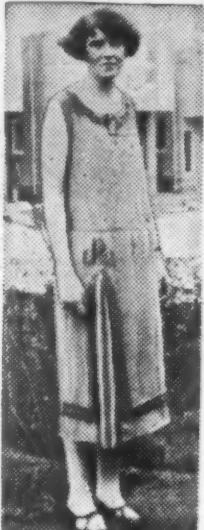
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two boarders decided on a trip to the beach. That worried me a little, because I knew men were not so watchful of kids in dangerous places as women usually are, and there are heap of dangerous places along the La Jolla shore line. I got so nervous over it as I dressed the little fellow that I could hardly find the buttons.

"Buddy," I begged, "you'll stick tight to Uncle's hand? If you tumbled down the cliffs you'd never see Mummy or Daddy again. The sea would eat you all up."

"Pooh—I'd swim, like Daddy does."

"You couldn't, dear—there's too many rocks. They'd hit you and hurt you. Just hang on to uncle and don't run round until you're on the sand, and then don't go far in the water."

YOU'LL be careful of Buddy?" I had to ask it as I delivered the child into his uncle's keeping. "He's so excitable—you'd better not let go of him while you're on the crags."

He fixed me with a look of superior wisdom and assured me he knew all of the child's peculiarities, having visited Lil in San Francisco the winter previous when her husband was reorganizing the northern office of his company. "We'll be back about four, and I would like dinner promptly this evening if possible."

Oh, how I did long to slap his face just at that minute. I felt primitive, and I'd have given a year off my life to have had the courage to slap his face and carry Buddy off in my arms to some place of refuge free from the supercilious male.

Shades of chivalry! Were all of us so lofty with the simple folk who did our dirty work, or was this man an overbearing ass, or was I an imaginative fool? I asked myself, but I couldn't answer it. First it was the one, then the other, or neither or both. But I knew anyway that so far as I myself was concerned there should be no class distinctions in future except those that marked differences in manner or mind. Position should never again influence my attitude toward the rest of the human family.

I was so tired by the time I had luncheon cleared away and the house in order that I dropped asleep on the bed, and dreamed horribly about finding poor little Buddy all battered up at the base of the cliff, and of hunting in the caves for his careless uncle in the hope of wreaking vengeance upon him.

The dream ended with the clanging of the ambulance bell as it came to carry all that was left of poor Buddy away, and I woke in a cold sweat to find that there was a bell ringing long and frantically, and to realize at last that it was the front door-bell.

I hurried to open it, to discover the two objects of my dream standing there upon the door-mat in not much better case than I had dreamed them, both dripping wet, and Uncle Ed white and shaking as he held the limp body of my little Buddy in his arms.

QUICK!" he bit out. Open the big bed. Where on earth were you? Hurry—he fell—I've got to get the doctor."

I said never a word. I couldn't speak, but I went to him and fiercely gathered the little limp body into my arms. I don't know why, but he yielded him to me without any effort to resist and went himself ahead of me and opened the bed.

While he was out hunting the doctor I slipped the child's wet clothes from him and wrapped him in soft warm things, shivering with one chill after another as I watched his colorful face for some hopeful sign. His heart was still beating, it seemed to me normally, but I was so nervous I couldn't be sure.

I put my ear down against him and listened, my own heart seeming to cease its

beat as I lay there. At that moment the doctor came in.

I'll never forget that ten minutes, and when it was over I realized that I had been in the queerest state of mind I had ever been in. I could have given my life easily to bring the child back, but the emotion which was uppermost was not the fear for him, terrible as that was, but pity for the man I had trusted him to—an almost heartbreaking pity for this man I had come nearer to hating than anybody I had ever known.

I could scarcely take my eyes off his face. He was white as chalk, and there were lines like visible agony drawn down his cheeks from his eyes. He said absolutely nothing after he came back with the doctor, but his eyes told me just how terrible he felt, and when Buddy opened his eyes and the color crept back into his face, that man turned suddenly to me and gripped my hand fiercely, and blurting "Look after him," rushed out of the room as if he could not hold himself together another minute.

I WAS glad he went, for I was near to turning baby myself; and the relief of the doctor's verdict that Buddy was quite all right and only needed to be kept quiet for the day, took away all need for self-control.

It was late evening before I saw the boy's uncle again. He did not appear for supper, but came in about nine bringing a huge bouquet of lilacs.

"I wired his mother," he said to me hoarsely. "The doctor said—I waited for him outside—he said Buddy was all right, but he ought to have his mother as soon as she could come."

"Oh—you shouldn't have done that!" I exclaimed. "She—why she perhaps can't come and it will worry her to death."

"I can't help that; she ought to know. You don't understand—it is so different when one is just working for people. You mean well, but Buddy needs love as well as just looking after, and I'm only a man. I don't feel right—leaving him just with you. There isn't a good child's nurse here, and it seems hard to find a reliable one free in San Diego."

So that was what the man had been about. Oh Reuben, Reuben, what a fine world this would be! My heavens! it was no use standing there arguing his stupidity. I left him. He called me back.

"Please put these lilacs in water; Buddy's crazy about flowers, and I thought he'd like them. I'll go in to him while you fix them. I have some trinkets in my pocket for him."

I took the lilacs and went to the kitchen for a vase, and when I came back in the room, Uncle Ed was on his knees by the bed talking tommy-rot to Buddy in the chummiest way, but with a catch in his voice that made my eyes sting in spite of the still more or less riled condition of my feelings toward him.

Privately that afternoon I sent another telegram to Lil, telling her Buddy was all right and that she need not worry, hoping that it might relieve her tension in case she was in dilemma about leaving Stanley.

I did not sleep very soundly that night, and twice in the hallway by our door I heard footsteps passing and knew that Uncle Ed was in worse case than myself. I didn't blame him. I felt bad enough—felt that I had not lived up to the trust that Lil had reposed in me, but I should have felt far worse had I been directly responsible for that fall.

Morning found us all a little strained but a good deal happier. Buddy was bright and talkative, and might have been up and about, but I thought it wiser to keep him in bed until his stiffness eased a little

more. The side on which he had fallen was pretty sore. I carried him out into the living-room, however, and laid him on the davenport where he could watch the sea, and his uncle sat by him all morning and read and played with him.

I caught the man watching me now and then as I moved about putting things to rights, and was prepared for something, but not for quite what he said when he got suddenly up and confronted me as I was leaving the room.

"I'm afraid I've been rude to you several times, Fritzi," he said quite humbly. "You warned me to be careful of Buddy. I've thought of that a lot since. I should have appreciated your suggestion. I'm sorry."

And quite naturally I found myself apologizing for him.

"Women are always more fearful than men," I said lightly, forgetting entirely for the moment my rôle of servant and speaking in the tone of an equal. "That makes us better guardians."

He stared at me a little oddly, then said simply, "I guess you're right."

A moment later he asked me in some constraint how long I had been in Mrs. Armour's service.

"Only three days," I informed him demurely.

"Do you mean to say that Lil went away the day you came to her; that she left her boy with you—a stranger?"

"Oh, no," I assured him, suppressing an almost irresistible smile. "You see I've been with her before. She has known me ever since she came to Los Angeles."

"Oh, that's different."

I agreed to the proposition most heartily, and excused myself before we reached any further complications.

The day went well, but I was glad when night came, because I was fearfully tired and my head ached abominably, and I imagine that the other two felt little better as the day wore on.

Buddy slept that night like a top, and as soon as I felt assured of his comfort and well-being I slept likewise, to waken late with the sun shining brightly in my face.

The child was still asleep, so I took my time dressing, and just for the devil of it decided to dress my hair carefully and put on a more becoming dress than I had yet ventured to wear. I had finished my hair, but was still in Lil's dressing gown, when Buddy came running in with a yell of "Fritzi, I'm not sick any more. See?" He seemed good as new, while I proceeded to help him into his clothes. This was hardly finished when I was startled by a commotion in the front of the house.

Before I could reach the door across the living-room, a latch-key turned in the lock and the front door flung wide, revealing Lil with Stanley Armour beside her, looking a little white and unsteady but anything but dead.

MY BOY!" Lil cried as soon as she saw me.

"Just fine," I assured her. "Not a thing to worry about. Buddy! Come and see who's here!"

We hugged each other heartily and then Stan came along and put his arm about me the way he always does and gave me a big smack.

It did our hearts good to hear the yell of delight with which Buddy greeted Lil and Stan. And soon he was going through Stan's grip in the hope of finding treasures.

"Fritzi, you're the finest woman on earth—next to Lil. Can you get us a cup of coffee? We came from Los without grub, and the doctor said I could have coffee once a day."

I flew into the kitchen, fixed the percolator and was back in two minutes, but not too quick to permit another person to



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put in his appearance in the front room. He was standing with his back to me as I paused in the kitchen door. His arm was round Lil's shoulders affectionately, but he was positively shouting something at both Lil and Stan and I couldn't help but hear.

"Fredericka Harrison! Don't be silly! Why—why—why, good heaven, man! I—oh, I say—you're joking, aren't you?"

He had jerked his arm from Lil's shoulder and was knocking his fist into the palm of his hand in nervous trip-hammer fashion. I wanted to retreat, but I stood there trying to decide what to do, and while I hesitated he moved a little and Stan saw me, from over his shoulder. He began laughing.

"Here she is," Stan yelled. "Fritz, you little devil, explain yourself. Lil, fetch her here." This last as I turned to flee.

Lil caught me and dragged me in with an arm about my waist. She had twice my strength and I had no chance against her.

"Miss Fredericka Harrison, may I present my cousin, or rather Stan's cousin, Captain William Edric Craig?"

Lil put on a ceremonious air as she introduced us, but not even she could have guessed the shock that little rite gave me. "Cap" Craig! The man I had dreamed of meeting! Oh, it was preposterous, ironic, that we should come to know one another so hateful a way.

I don't know what color I turned; I kept praying that I should not redder, but I managed to acknowledge the introduction with polite reserve.

I rather liked Captain Craig's manner of receiving the introduction, in spite of the fact that I had been half hating him for two days. He had merely bowed very profoundly and make no effort at all at apology. I think I should have hated him worse if he had tried to right himself with me there before Lil and Stan.

STAN contented himself a bantering shot as Lil and I left the room.

"Pon my soul, Rick, I believe she did it for convention's sake. You should be grateful—she saved your hotel fare."

My ears burned, but not too hotly to hear Craig's irritated reply, following us through the partly closed door as we crept down the hall.

"Cut it, Stan. If you guy her again I'll kill you. I treated her like a common servant, and I feel like the devil. She must think me nothing but a rotten bounder."

As I was bringing in the coffee and toast, Captain Craig stepped into the room and drew the door shut behind him. His manner was so significant that there was no ignoring him, so I laid my things on the table and stood waiting for him to speak.

"I had to speak to you," he apologized, his voice warmer than I had heard it, but keenly embarrassed. "I know you're wishing me on the other side of the earth, but I'm going to ask you to give me another chance. Won't you try to forgive my stupidity—a little at a time?"

"I'm afraid you're worrying a great deal about nothing," I heard myself saying quite coolly and with far more unconcern than I really felt. "It doesn't matter in the least."

There was no doubt at all from the disappointed look that fell across his face that something mattered a whole lot just then, but I wasn't just in the mood to worry over his feelings at the moment and I added indifferently, "Won't you please tell them breakfast is ready?"

He paid no attention to the request.

"It matters a lot to me," he said earnestly; "more than you'd guess, because there are some things you don't know. Won't

you at least accept my apology, and grant me the chance to make you my friend?"

"I'll accept it of course," I conceded a little stiffly, "but friendship is founded on other things than—mere acquaintance."

"True enough. I can thank you, anyway. For the rest I can only try."

I turned to gather up my tray, but he came beside me and took it from my hands, and following an impulse I could not resist I stood before him with my back against the door and refused to let him by until he released it.

YOU would not have done that for me yesterday. You shall not today."

He gave it back to me, his face flaming, then opened the door for me and stood aside to let me by. But he would not let me wait on Stan, and carried Stan's breakfast and his own into the living-room, while Lil and I ate with Buddy in the dining-room.

"Fritz," Lil began, when Buddy had left us for the society of Dad and his uncle, "you're not going to be peeved at Cap?"

"Peeved?"

"Oh, don't pretend, goose. I know he rubbed you all crosswise. Whatever made you carry on the bluff?"

I told her the circumstances, making her laugh until the tears came with the picture I drew of our encounter on the step.

"But, girl, what could you expect of a poor man? You'd dressed for the part—you admit it. It seems to me you owe him an apology for making an awful fool of him."

"Is that the way it looks to you?" I laughed. "Well, take another look. I did nothing to him but wait on him and swallow his criticisms. What have I to apologize for? People should have a little more keenness—one can't always go round in labeled clothes. Beside that, clothes don't mean very much in this day and age. You're as likely to find broadcloth and silk on the wrong kind as the right. I tell you anyway, no man has the right to assume that sort of tone to anybody—least of all, any woman."

"Oh, pooh, Fritz, you're just insulted. You do the high and mighty too when you feel superior. We all do. I'll bet dollars the poor man didn't even dream he was being lofty."

"Of course he didn't then—it was so darn natural it hurt. But take it from me, Lil, he knows it now. He can't be humble enough. I'd like to discover a real he-man who has room enough in his soul to be gracious to everybody from the scrubwoman up to the queen."

"Hope you find him, Fritz. But it's my opinion that you'd be safer to take the first half human one you find and help him train over for the part. You don't find many of them like that in the rough. They're usually given wings before they mature into real he-men."

IDIDN'T tell Lil how hard that sunk in, but perhaps it did influence me slightly that evening when Captain Craig came to me out on the porch after supper and asked me to drive with him to Point Loma.

He was so humble about it and so really in earnest in his desire to win my approval that I found the adamant feeling a little hard to maintain, and then Lil's suggestion, about taking them in the rough, edged in. I did like him, in spite of everything, and I had dreamed about him for two solid years.

We went about seven, and he was nice enough not to talk except in a friendly way about the country we passed through, touching lightly upon his trip back from Europe. The evening was too beautiful to spend upon personalities. San Diego looked like a white city bathed in rose tints as

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we drove out to the Point, and the great banks of white clouds that flanked the far peaks behind her were glowing with every tone the rainbow light had to offer.

"Lovely, isn't it?" he said, after I had sat gazing across the bay in a silence so long it might easily have been construed as rudeness.

"If you will," he went on without waiting for my reply, "we won't drive back until the moon is up and all the lights of San Diego are full blaze. It is almost as lovely then as in the sunset glow."

"I should love that," I agreed.

I WAS here four years ago in June," he told me a little later. "It was before I was mustered out and I had very little time to myself, but I've always wanted to come again, and—it's a queer thing to say to you when I know how you feel toward me, but I always wished I might come here some day with the girl I had dreamed of finding.

"Oh, don't look that way at me, Miss Harrison. I'm fully aware of the silliness of what I'm saying, and please don't imagine I'm going to tell you that I think my dream has come true. It hasn't—that's just the devil of it. I am here and the girl isn't with me—she's a thousand miles away."

So that was it! I was only a side issue, an hour filler, and it was sheer loneliness that had gripped him from the first, making him less human than he might have been under other circumstances.

If he had hurt me, at least he should never guess it. Forcing a mood of hearty interest I turned toward him eagerly.

"Oh, tell me about her, do, Captain Craig. I always admire a man who follows an ideal until he makes it materialize."

He looked at me a moment oddly.

"But I haven't done that, you see," he said ruefully, after a pause. "The materialization end of it hasn't worked out. I have discovered just lately that I've been following a will-o'-the-wisp, and there is never any certainty about them."

"Tell me," I faked interest.

"Not now. Wait till we are riding back. I'll spoil the landscape if I obtrude my affairs into the picture."

"You are thoughtful."

"I'm only doing penance. Don't imagine I am not continually conscious of my sins where you are concerned, because I don't dwell on them. I hate myself whenever I think of these last two days. Will you ever forgive me?"

"I think I have—in part—because I realize I gave you some provocation for the first mistake."

"You certainly did—and kept it up. If you had greeted me that first day with the sort of lovely picture I saw in Stan's arms this morning, I should never have made such a rotten mistake."

OH, NO," I said, "you would in all probability have called me down for wearing my mistress' clothes. Lil had all of mine up north with her."

"I'm afraid Stan was right."

"How?"

"He called you a little devil."

"That's Stan's idea of a pet name."

"It's rather neat. Why didn't you annihilate me when I razed you about Bud's getting wet?"

"I should have very much enjoyed slapping you—both then and when you ignored my suggestion about taking care of Bud on the shore."

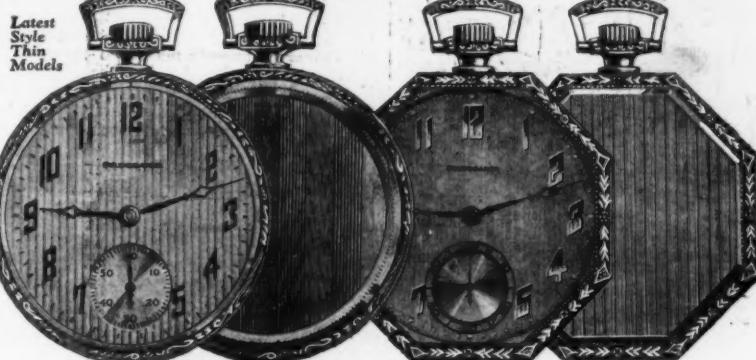
"I give you leave now, if it will even things up between us, and make you forget it."

"Thanks—it isn't necessary. I'm a generous minded—devil."

"You're a darling."

"Take care—she's a thousand miles away."

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He did not answer that, and for the rest of the time at Point Loma he seemed to have lost his tongue except to speak now and then of some matter of special interest. Our personal touch was gone, and I concluded that his spirit had flown the thousand miles to his will-o'-the-wisp.

When we reached La Jolla he asked me if I should mind if we left the car in the garage and walked along the crags. I consented, because I loved to watch the spray upon the rocks.

"There's a sheltered spot just below here," he suggested when we had gone the better half of the way. "Won't you climb down and sit for a little? It isn't late."

He felt my hesitation, I think. "You don't mind?" he asked anxiously.

"I'm thinking," I fenced, "about will-o'-the-wisps."

SO AM I. It's that I want to talk to you about. I couldn't talk—driving."

That ended my hesitation. If I stalled now, he would think me peeved—uninterested because of his interest elsewhere.

"All right," I agreed. "I'll stay a while."

The spot he led me to was unique, a cup-shaped cave washed from the upper strata of sandstone by the winter storms, but high and dry enough now, and enchanting in its very weirdness. Captain Craig placed me comfortably near the opening where I could watch the foam along the south shoreline, and we sat a few moments regaining our breath after the rather exciting business of finding our perch.

It was I who broke the silence, feeling a sort of oppression that demanded speech.

"You said I might help you solve a problem," I suggested.

"I'll have to tell you a story first."

"All right—if it's not too long."

"It's long enough, but I'll make it short. You know I was in the war."

"Yes, and I have not thanked you again for your wonderful letter to me and all your goodness to Bill," I blurted. "I never answered it as I should. I was too broken up about Bill. I intended to write again and I never did."

"I liked your answer. It was short, but it felt like a piece out of your heart. I knew how you felt. I answered it, but I tore up the letter, because I felt I had no right to—well—I knew your interest in me was because of Bill, and I didn't want to presume upon it. I thought you might write again."

"Life's full of false starts, isn't it?" I said musingly.

"Yes."

"Don't let this be one," I suggested; "go on to the finish. I interrupted you."

"It was while I was in the war—that long ago—that I glimpsed my will-o'-the-wisp. I didn't see her—just heard about her from a friend who knew her and loved her. He loved her so well that I never felt I had any right to her till after he died, and then for a long time I was afraid to go and tell her about it for fear it would only hurt her."

"I've always been afraid about her—afraid in every way—because I never believed she would understand when I did find courage to go to her—afraid she wouldn't believe me sincere, because I had loved her in that strange will-o'-the-wisp fashion. I'd never seen her except in a tiny photograph, but it wasn't her looks that counted although I loved that, too. It was the spirit of her. I'd learned about that from this other man who loved her, and afterward when I came back here to the coast I found Lil had known her, and I pumped her for all the history I could get, and everything pointed to the fact that I had found the lady of dreams I'd been looking for all my life."

"I had no chance to meet her that year and I had to go right back to Washington, and this summer is the first chance since. When I knew I was free to come, I just kept hanging on to myself and reminding myself that five years is a long time to expect a girl to go unmarried for someone whom she doesn't even know exists, much less care about. But I came, and when I heard that I might meet her at a friend's in Los Angeles and that she was still just a girl I thought the thing was working clear."

"But when I arrived the fates had intervened again. She had gone away, and there wasn't a soul who knew where. I was so sore and exasperated that I broke my own engagement and came down here to Lil's and worked off my disappointment on her would-be serving-maid, and if you are going to tell me I'm getting just what I deserve, you may just keep the information to yourself because I already know it."

"Humph!" I grunted. "They say knowledge is power. Why don't you make use of it?"

"Tell me, please, what I ought to do next. Tell me what you really think," he begged. "I'm not joking—I'm dead serious, and your answer means more to me than you guess. Don't you believe me?"

"Yes," I said, a little uncertainly. "I believe you—I just don't quite understand why my opinion should count—so much."

"You will. Anyway it does. Tell me—do you think she might care? Think it might count with her that I'd kept all the other women out of my life just thinking of her for five years; that I'd built every expectation and every hope with the thought of her approval? Do you think it would count with a woman, and that she might take the rest of me "as is" in the good hope that I might prove up with her backing my efforts?"

"Yes," I blurted at last. "Of course she would take you." Then added for my own satisfaction, "She would be an idiot if she didn't."

He did not talk after that, but took my hands and lifted me to my feet and helped me back up the rocks to the terrace. A fog was blowing in and the wind was damp and chilly as we neared the house, and the chill of it seemed to find my bones.

I shivered a little as we went into the silent house, and Captain Craig noticed it and lit the gas log, drawing me down upon the hearth-rug beside him to warm up. He drew something from his pocket then and laid it in my lap in the fire-light.

LOOK at it," he said simply. "I've carried it in my pocket for five years and it's rather battered up, but it's still there. It's the only piece of Bill's property I didn't send home to Flix."

Flix! Bill's old pet name for me! The tears choked me as he said it. No one had ever called me that but Bill, and for a moment the sound of it quite overcame me. Then at last my vision cleared, and I found myself looking at an old photograph of myself, taken years before with my hair hanging down my back. It was a sweet picture of a very serious-eyed girl with her heart full of dreams, and it brought back so many memories of my dear gone brother that for a moment its present significance was lost. Then of a sudden I felt "Cap" Craig's hand on mine and I looked up at him with nothing in my thoughts but bewildered questioning. "This?" I choked— "Why—what?" I faltered.

"Will-o'-the-wisp," was all he said to me in answer. Then after a moment he held out his hands to me. "Did you mean it?" he asked, "that answer you gave for her?"

"I'd be an idiot if I didn't."

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Body and Soul

[Continued from page 28]

time, and pulled the bell-rope softly and slowly.

"I should have known I'm not fit to look up to you," I said humble-like. "I'm sorry."

"I'm not, Paul," she answered low and sweet. "No, I'm glad. Just one moment—to remember. Only don't ever do it again. Oh, Paul—for your own good don't ever do it again."

A black-robed figure was opening the gate from the inside, and when Rhoda went through, disappearing into the darkness, I felt like she was being snatched away from me.

The next morning, just as I was leaving for the mill, Rhoda came walking up the front path. She was dressed in gingham, like one of the village girls, and her hair was pulled back straight underneath a sunbonnet, but for all her trying to make herself resemble other folks, she was only more startling and beautiful.

"I'm coming to help your mother," she said, passing right by me as if she had never kissed me, nor rested in my arms.

Day after day, week after week, in rain or sunshine, Rhoda Davidson came every morning to work for Ma like hired help. A body could see she never did such work, but she learned quick as a flash, and before I knew it, I was finding her lugger water and washing clothes.

God knows Ma and me never wanted her to do such things. Ma didn't like the girl around at all. She went about in those days, with a frown between her eyes even when Rhoda was gone. There was no one could stop Rhoda, though.

For, if Ma said something, she'd begin to cry low and pitiful, begging to be allowed to work, promising over and over again not to get in our way.

"Leave her be, Ma," I said once.

"Paul," said Ma, "are you and me going to quarrel over a nobody from nowhere?"

"No, Ma, but if she's happy working—"

"But what does she want here, Paul? What does she do it for?" Ma wanted to know.

From the kitchen I could hear Rhoda's breath coming in sharp sobs, like she was tearing them right out of her soul.

"Folks are talking," added Ma.

It seems like most tongues are hung in the middle and wag both ways. Who was she? Where'd she come from? Why was she working in our place? Where'd she get the money to stop at the Retreat? The postmaster was careful to tell that she never got any mail. She never had visitors. She talked to nobody but us.

DURING all that time, Rhoda and I played see-saw, you might say. Believe it or not, but on days when the mountains were clear and close, with the bright sunlight showing up every ridge and hollow, she was friendly and jealous too, and without mystery or secrets. But on dull, rainy days, or when the mist floated up between valley and peaks, hiding the beauty of the slopes with new beauty—she was like that, too. Now troubled and sad, now joyous and adventuresome.

'Twas a hard time for all of us with her in the house. On Thursdays, though, when both of us went up to relieve Uncle Eph, things were like they had been the first day. Rhoda was a dancing, carefree dryad of the trail, and touched by something not of this world. What days we had up on top, climbing the fire tower, or talking, hushed in the quiet heat of noon! What hours listening to Uncle Eph's stories, before it was time to start down!

Being up there with her satisfied all the

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craving in my soul. Instead of being a little creature surrounded by bewildering peaks, I was part of the mountains myself, on the inside, you might say, of the mystery and glamour which kept luring me on from childhood.

'Twas Rhoda who used to bring up six lumps of sugar every week for the motherless bear cub Uncle Eph was rearing. 'Twas she who got up the scheme of teaching tricks to his sleepy old pet owl. 'Twas she who discovered that the rattle-snake in the glass case could be made to rattle by tapping three times on the side.

And yet, through all that spring and summer, Rhoda and I never exchanged so much as a handclasp. As for a kiss, or any repeating of that scene at the convent gate—seemed like we kept pulling apart, hedging away from each other in the flesh, whilst our spirits were crying out to end the ordeal. Not once during that period did I see that look in Rhoda's eyes, though oftentimes, when I lifted my head suddenly, I'd find her with her eyes shut, and her face white, like a person struggling with some bad pain.

IT JUST wasn't natural for two young folks to be loving each other, to be seeing each other every day, to be walking together at night, by starlight and moonlight, in rain and in wind and in thunder, and to be keeping at arm's length all the time. Especially after having known one clinging embrace, one damp, soft, red kiss. Something was bound to happen, and something did—over to Minnie Smith's corn husking in September.

Now I was never a great one for corn huskings, and such things. Not but what I didn't go and do my share of the work. Only when it came to the dancing, and games, and teasing the girls—that wasn't in my line. I was shy before other folks and ignorant of the simplest square dances, let alone the waltz—and other new fangled steps.

But when Rhoda, on hearing of the party, begged me to take her, I couldn't refuse. For certain, there wasn't any harm in it, and besides, she had never asked me to go anywhere with her before. We decided to make a night of it. For days before, we went about whispering and laughing in corners, making plans. Even Ma softened a bit, and invited Rhoda to spend the night, seeing it would be so late when we got back.

I recollect plain as if it happened yesterday how I got out of my overalls and into my boiled shirt and Sunday suit quicker than ever I did before in my life. Then I went 'round to Ed Sobel's to get the rig I'd hired, since I didn't want a third party driving with us, and when I got back Rhoda was standing on the porch ready for me. She was wrapped in a cloak of some wonderful, soft cloth, colored like sparkling wine, a grand color for a girl with her dark hair and white skin. The cape had a hood which covered her hair.

Just as I brought Ed's fine-stepping chestnut mare to a stop, Ma came out behind Rhoda and called out to her, "Have you got a handkerchief, dear?" just like all other mothers were in the habit of doing when their daughters went to parties. 'Twas a small thing, but it added the last drop to my cup of happiness. And Rhoda must have felt the same way, for she threw her arms around Ma's neck, like she did once to me, only she didn't kiss her, but just pressed her soft young cheek to Ma's tanned one.

Then she ran down the path to meet me. Before the whole street of people, mostly going to Minnie Smith's, too, I caught Rhoda in my arms and swung her into the rig. Out of her eyes, looking up at me, there flashed that old mysterious look

of boldness. She was a dark flower in among the leaves, tempting the passerby. I lifted her into her seat, quick and sort of panicky. Then shadows came creeping into her face, and she shut her eyes like she was tired.

Before we reached our destination, a great harvest moon came out, hanging lazily in the sky just between the two humps on Mt. Samter. 'Twas easy to see why the Indians call September the month of the Corn Moon. For that moon was golden like ripe corn in the fields, and it filled a man with the holy feeling that all Nature was coming to fruit.

Ever heard a thunderclap on a sunny day, and noticed how folks drop what they're doin' and look up at the sky? That was the way Rhoda came into the barn—like a thunderclap—and it wasn't a minute before all eyes were on her. She wore a white dress, that glittered and sparkled like fresh snow, tiny frosted slippers, and a wreath of stars in her black hair. Of course it wasn't the way girls in the mountains dressed, and she must have known she'd attract attention.

But that wasn't the trouble. 'Twas her mouth rounded into a ripe, red raspberry. 'Twas her eyes, set in her white face like damson plums hanging in the enchanted moonlight. 'Twas her bare shoulder and smooth arms, her slim white throat, her hair shining blue-black in the lamplight, same as a swallow's wing in the sun. These kept beckoning the men on, and all that were there didn't need a second invitation.

I wasn't jealous. God knows that I wasn't begrudging Rhoda any pleasures. Only it was madness to carry on the way she did that night in a simple little village like ours, and my temper was up. Of course the other girls, standing around either embarrassed or furious, according to their natures, called her shameless. Loving her, I couldn't call it that, but what with my own anger and the desire to protect her from unjust things folks was saying, I had a miserable time of it.

I would have warned her, only I couldn't get close enough to her for that. She was dancing every second of the time, now a reel, now a waltz or two-step, then a Paul Jones. I couldn't even catch her glance. She didn't look my way, but kept gazing up at her partners with that daring look which frightened me.

A fellow wants the girl he loves to be perfect, and Rhoda wasn't. Still, maybe I'd never have done a thing, if it hadn't been for her singling out Dick Towers. He was a good-for-nothing, handsome and gay like all such fellows are, married to Jennie Bell after having betrayed her, not supporting her now, but somehow, in spite of his reputation, being able to make friends with other girls. Pretty soon Rhoda was dancing with nobody but him, letting him hold her closer than was the custom then.

KISS your partner," called the leader of the Paul Jones.

Most of the fellows and girls were embarrassed—just brushing each other's lips and drawing apart. But Dick Towers snatched Rhoda to him in his brazen way, and when the next figure was ordered up, he kept right on kissing her, like they was the only two in the room. Something in the way he did it made folks want to look away. Maybe you know what I mean.

Well—I was big and muscular and able to argue with my fists better than with my tongue. I don't remember clear what I did. I know everything blurred before me, and I struck out. When I came to, Rhoda and me were out in the moonlight. I was pulling her away from the barn, and I let her hand go so sudden she stum-

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bled and almost fell before I knew it.

"Paul—what have I done?"

"You did it on purpose."

"But what—what?"

"I guess you know same as I do." I kept looking at her hard, until her white trembling figure turned to marble against the dark tree. Her eyes were growing round and distracted, like when a person wakes out of a nightmare and finds it real.

"No—no," she cried, shrinking away. "Not that, Paul—not that. I didn't—oh, I didn't forget myself? Paul—Paul—help me!"

"You did it on purpose. You wore that dress to attract attention. You flirted. You let that no-account touch you, just to twist my heart. Because I'm only a fool from the country, but you and him have city ways."

She was sobbing into her hands. "I thought you understood."

"If you had a good excuse—"

"I can't help it, Paul," she said, stretching out her arms to me like she was begging forgiveness. "It's my fate. It's something bad and wicked in the Davidson women. Our bodies make us do things our souls don't want to do. I've tried to fight it, Paul, with my eyes closed and my teeth clenched. I've tried to fight it in the long quiet hours with the Sisters. I tried to fight it working hard for your mother. But most of all—Paul, listen to me. You've got to listen to me. I was fighting—for your sake—"

She lay in a crumpled heap at my feet. Folks in the barn seemed strangely quiet. The world was just rocking before me when I gathered her up in my arms and gave all my own strength to warm her cold little body. I wasn't angry any more. My kisses brought her back.

"I love you, Rhoda," I said. "What's the difference? Let's begin all over again. Only I've got to have all of you, or nothing. I'm kissing you now, and may God help the man who puts his kiss over mine. I'll kill him! I want you, and if you'll take me—"

I can't say yet how she got away from me. But there she stood, with her arms raised to the sky and her palms turned out. "Oh, God," she prayed, "why did you let my love me?"

I did something I promised not to do. But the pagan sight of her all in white, standing with arms raised, not clasped the way other folks do in prayer, made my lips speak before my brain. "Who are you?" I whispered.

Something stirred in her, like the wind through the trees. "The last man who defended my honor, such as it was, went to prison," she murmured.

"You're talking nonsense, Rhoda."

NO, ELLERY STONEHAM shot your

father for me."

"Rhoda, don't you love me a little?"

"You asked me who I am. I'm trying to tell you. Why don't you listen?" she went on, her voice low and flat, but hard, like it would soon break. "I'm Rhoda Davidson, the woman who—it was for me that Ellery Stoneham—oh, what is it I want to say?" she moaned. "Listen to me. I'm the girl your father insulted before he was shot by Ellery Stoneham."

Believe it or not, but I laughed. The poor child was sick, in a fever most likely and anybody could see the story I'd once told her had settled on her mind. That was it. She was sick, and wandering. I'd best humor her, and get her home fast, and all that had happened tonight was due to her sickness. No man ever felt more like a brute than I did then. Blaming the poor child for delirium! My own words stuck in my throat.

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"Come home with me, Rhoda dear," I said. "Why, you weren't more than a child when my father died."

She shrank away like she'd been hit, and her breath came in gasps.

"Don't touch me. You'll be soiled. Please God, you're not tainted already. I tell you I wasn't a child. I was eighteen, with the body of a woman. And I kept luring men on, without knowing it. He—your father—

"What's the difference how it happened? On a wild night like this—when I was thirteen—my mother ran away with a man she didn't love. It's our fate. I couldn't let you love me, Paul, without telling you who I was. You ask the district attorney in New York. He knows me. He has my picture—and my name."

I didn't stretch out a hand to help her. Something in her dull eyes, something in her voice convinced me it was no delirium. A feeling stronger than anger paralyzed me. She was *that* woman, that unspeakable person who'd brought the worst sorrow of all into Ma's unhappy life. She was the girl I'd always felt secret resentment for. She was the girl who wasn't what she ought to be. If only I hadn't loved her!

"What did you come here for?" I said at last.

She leaned against an apple tree, and her arms were stretched out along the low branches, like a white cross in the moonlight, but I didn't see anything holy in her sorrow. She was *that* woman—

"A private detective told me he'd left a wife and son here. I thought the son was a child. I have money. Too much money. I wanted to give it to you. But when I saw you were a man, and proud—" she broke off sobbing. "What could I do but work myself to the bone, to make your mother's life easier? Paul, I'll die if you don't believe me. Stoneham wasn't even a friend of mine. But he wanted to be. Paul, dear, let me atone. Oh, God," she cried softly, like a child begging its mother, "give me the chance to atone."

Maybe it was only a boy's notion of honor. Maybe it was what any man ought to do for his mother. I can't tell. I don't even know whether I struck Rhoda Davidson. To this day I don't know, and the thought keeps torturing me by day and haunting me by night. I remember raising my fists. That's all. The next recollection is of rushing off, with my own harsh laughing ringing in my ears. From a white cross against a dark tree I seemed to hear these words. "But why, dear God, do I love him too?"

ONLY one mad desire kept beating inside me like a trapped creature. I wanted to get up into the mountains. I wanted the crooning voice of the trees to sing me to eternal sleep. I wanted the beckoning arms of the trail to lead me to death. Up there, on the top of Mt. Samter, were peace and rest and retreat from this terrible revelation, and like a madman, I rushed into the woods at night.

I don't know why I didn't lose my way, except that I'd been up there so often, my feet guided me aright. I stumbled into Uncle Eph's cabin just as dawn was breaking over the observation tower. Green and rose and orange flooded the mountain top like colored waters flowing 'round us. Then the sun burst through—but it wasn't dawn for me, no sun bursting through the darkness of my life.

That fall Dick Towers sued me for assault. Seems I had broken his handsome nose. That was a terrible time, but Ma had put away in my name all the money my father had ever sent her, and she gave it to me to settle with Dick and keep out of court.

Throughout the winter, I heard of Rhoda only by way of gossip in the village, and you may be sure there was plenty of it. The Retreat of St. Theresa closed, as usual, in October, and the Sisters left town until spring. That left Rhoda without a home, and the only place she could get to shelter herself, was an old shack down in the brush at the river's edge. She lived there alone, scarce coming into the village, avoiding all, and avoided by all. Folks snickered that it was the best place for her, with the nearest neighbors out in the middle of the river on Spruce Island. They referred to Annie Feit and Jim Severance who, folks said, lived unlawful, and were a thorn in the town's side because their farm prospered and they were happy.

Most of that winter I was gone, logging up the river with other men from the sawmill, and watching for the spring when I could begin to go up the trail. Uncle Eph, who only stayed up in the tower from March to November, kept Ma company. Rhoda was worse than dead to me, and yet sometimes I'd start out of sleep wondering if I'd really struck her.

ONE dark February night, when I happened to be home, Dr. Long drove up to the house bringing me a message. Rhoda Davidson was over on Spruce Island dying. She had sent for me.

"Paul," said old Doc Long, "I always feel that the children I helped into the world ought to obey me. If you've got a heart, you'll come with me."

I didn't say a word, but climbed into the sleigh. On the way he told me how it happened. Four nights before that, Jim Severance came to Doc Long saying Annie needed help. She was giving life to a child, and by the way Jim spoke, Doc could see he'd need help. Driving down, he stopped at several houses asking women to come along, as was custom in the village where there was no nurse. Everybody refused, not wishing to help a godless woman. The last house before crossing the ice was Rhoda's shack. On a chance, he went in, and to his surprise, she came right along.

Now the ice was pretty deep on the river, but in February it's apt to give, and before they reached the other side, sleigh, horse, and three occupants were floundering in the icy water. They managed to climb up out of the crack and walk the rest of the way. Rhoda wouldn't dry out or change her clothes, but insisted on getting to work at once.

All that night she kept close to the doctor, watching life at its beginning and at its hardest, doing things she never did before. In the morning Annie Feit and her baby died, and Doc Long ordered Rhoda to bed, he being suspicious of the cough she'd developed. When he realized it was pneumonia, he stayed on, nursing her himself.

"Is she really—dying, Doc?"

"I'm afraid, lad, I'm afraid."

With my long stride I got across the ice before the doctor. Jim Severance, haggard and stunned, led me into Rhoda's room, where she lay still and white under a gay quilt. Feeling me standing over her, she opened feverish eyes, and smiled. That smile was my punishment. It told me without words how much she needed me all this time.

I just dropped down on my knees and slipped my arm under her frail body. "Forgive me, Rhoda."

"I've never blamed you, boy," she said so weak that the doctor's words come back to me.

"Twas my fault, Rhoda. May God punish me, and take me instead."

She put her fingers over my lips. I kissed them, and kissed her mouth, tender, so as not to hurt her.

"Life has always been a lot of trouble

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for me, dearest," she whispered. "Only I'm thankful that God gave you back to me for a little while."

"For a whole life, Rhoda. What's got into you talking like that?"

Wan and pale, she smiled up at me, but with a knowing look, like she'd already glimpsed the future and felt pity for me for not knowing how things were going to be. And seeing her like that, nobody could have believed she was wicked whatever she did. Something there was clean and untouched in the heart of her, something that the Shadow of Death brought out clearer and clearer.

"Remember—how we—used to watch this island—through—Uncle Eph's glasses?" she asked me.

I nodded, being unable to talk. Outside the wind howled 'round and 'round the island. Windows rattled. Then there came a great cracking, splitting, booming noise. "The ice?" Rhoda formed with her lips.

I NODDED again. She lifted her hand like she wanted to stroke my face. I laid my cheek beside hers on the pillow and slipped my arm under her head.

"Lay me to sleep on this island," she said, and her voice was so strong, seemed to me some change for the good was coming. "So you can see my last bed from the tower. Promise me, will you, Paul?"

I laughed. Yes—laughed, being so sure she was mistaken. "You're not leaving me yet—" but she seemed so still there, I got scared. "Rhoda—Rhoda—" I called, but there is no voice loud enough to call last year's flowers back from where they've gone.

Just that way my dark, mysterious flower left me—with my arm under her and my cheek against hers.

* * * * *

Spring has passed forty times since first I saw Rhoda Davidson up ahead of me on the trail. Forty summers have gone since we took our Thursday climbs together. Forty Corn Moons have looked down on young lovers since that other moon watched our parting.

Forty years! That's a long time living on remorse. I'm an old man, now, sixty-one, but maybe a hundred, as other folks go.

And all of these forty years I've spent on Mt. Samter, excepting winters, taking Uncle Eph's place in the fire tower. He died that winter, too. The mountain called me—and I answered.

I've seen changes in these forty years. Folks discarding buggies for autos. Folks discarding autos to walk through green country. Folks learning to love the outdoors, and climbing up my mountain to see the view from the tower. They come for a day, and in their eyes I see the question. What makes me stay for a year?

IN FULL sight of that mountain lies all I ever loved—field, and stream, and people. Rhoda, Ma, Uncle Eph. The other night a troop of boy scouts came up to sleep out on the top. Sturdy, excited little lads they were, and when all was rolled in their blankets, one of their number blew taps.

In the rays of the dying sun, with the sad sweet notes choking me, I found my Rhoda's grave through the field glasses. Peace for her over there on the deserted land. Sanctuary—retreat—for me.

Lonesome? Yes, lonesome. The mountains are mighty lonesome. To some folks, me being one of them, the world is always that way.

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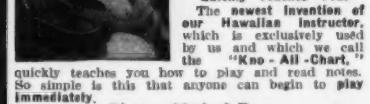
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Beyond the Breakers

[Continued from page 37]

indeed, when they understood each other so perfectly?

Craig's head appeared at the hatch above.

"Need another assistant, Charis? Dad's taken the wheel."

Again I had ceased to exist as far as Charis was concerned. I went back on deck.

We had come out of the river. Ahead and to our left lay the dancing blue expanse of Lake Superior; on our right rose the rocky headlands, with patches of raw earth between the sparsely growing pines. The lapping of the water against our bow mingled with the sound of the voices in the galley. Through the open hatch I could catch glimpses of Craig and Charis, and as I watched I marvelled at them. They were made of the same stuff, these two; they had the same sure idealism, the same fine strength, the same clear courage.

BUT it was none too easy, the task they had set themselves. As we all sat at dinner I could see a shadow now and then behind their shining eyes; I could hear now and then a note of hunger in their gay laughter. They were sitting side by side, Craig in his white sweater and corduroy knickers, she in her grey-blue sweater and handkerchief. And watching them, I felt that I would have given anything on earth to see them completely happy. In the presence of that love of theirs I had ceased to exist for myself even as I had ceased to exist for them. Charis was my wife, but she had never belonged to me as she belonged to this other man who would never be her husband.

Late in the afternoon we anchored in a sheltered bay surrounded by rugged granite hills. Mrs. Forrester cooked supper and Craig and Charis washed the dishes. Then they climbed up onto the unroofed deck at the bow to watch the sunset. Charis sat upon the deck while Craig lay at full length beside her, his head against her knee. They talked lightly and easily at first; then more quietly, with pauses between. At last came a long silence. They were like carven figures against that flaming sky.

Suddenly Craig rolled over and got onto his feet.

"Going to take a dip," he muttered as he passed us, not looking at any of us. Charis still sat carved in stone.

"Charis," Mrs. Forrester called, "Craig's going in swimming. Why don't you go with him?"

Charis rose and came back to where we were sitting.

"No, thank you, Aunt Marian. I don't like the water at night. It gives me the creeps."

"Nonsense, Charis," her uncle laughed. "Do you good. Wait a minute, Craig," as Craig appeared in his bathing suit.

Charis stood looking at Craig—at his dark hair . . . his smiling eyes . . . his brown arms . . . Her own eyes were dark with hunger. Craig waited in silence, watching her.

At last she shook her head. "Not tonight. I'll do my swimming in the daytime."

Craig turned away, climbed the railing, and dove cleanly into the darkly glittering water. Charis gave a deep sigh, like a swimmer who has passed safely over a dangerous breaker.

"I'm sleepy," she said. "Goodnight, everybody." And she went down into her cabin.

When I followed, half an hour later, she

was lying face down in her narrow berth, cowering against the wall as though she had been beaten. She did not stir until she thought I was asleep. Then I heard her sobbing—great, deep, quivering sobs that tore my heart. But I did not go to her, for I knew that I could never reach her in her sorrow. Charis had always shared her laughter with me, but never her tears.

At dawn I awakened to see her standing in the space between our berths, in her green bathing suit. A ray of early sunlight, coming through the porthole, turned her white shoulders to rosy gold. I watched as she stole lightly up the steps to the deck where Craig was sleeping, wrapped in his blankets. For a moment Charis stood there—a thing of living marble, her glowing eyes caressing him as he lay at her feet. Then, smiling, she touched him with her foot.

"Swim, Craig?" I heard her say, and I knew from the light in her eyes that he had awakened and was looking up at her. An instant later she disappeared from the field of my vision, and a splash told me that she was in the water. Then after a minute or so, I heard a second splash.

While I dressed I could hear their laughter and the sound of their swimming. They came back together just as I reached the deck. Craig swung himself up onto the boat and leaned over to help Charis. She had quite a bit of trouble in getting up; twice she slipped back into the water and once she gave a little cry and exclaimed laughingly that she had broken her arm—but I didn't offer to help, for I knew that they didn't want me. Craig got her up at last, and she hung for a moment against him, her wet arms around his neck. Then they both vanished and I had the lonely deck to myself.

Breakfast was a lively meal, for Craig and Charis, refreshed by the exercise in that pure cool water, were in the highest spirits. When we had finished, Charis rose and rolled up her sleeves, preparatory to washing the dishes. In the curve of her arm a faint purple bruise had appeared. "I told you I'd broken my arm," she said gaily to Craig, who was still seated beside her. But at the sight of that bruise on her white skin the boy's eyes darkened, and seizing her arm in both his hands he pressed his lips fiercely against it. I saw Charis quiver, and for a moment I held my breath. But she was equal to the occasion.

KISS it and make it well," she cried playfully. Craig released her arm and again they smiled surely into each other's eyes, knowing that they had passed another breaker.

I thought then of Swinburne's lines about the man who

"swims in sight of a great third wave
That never a swimmer shall cross or climb."

They were strong swimmers, Craig and Charis, but would they prove stronger than the sea against which they were swimming so gallantly? They had only two more days together, and surely before they parted they must encounter that great third wave. What would become of them then? Would they breast it strongly and pass on into the silent, lonely waters that lay beyond, or would they yield, and sink, beaten and broken, into the depths beneath? For the knowledge that they had failed their ideal would make their love a thing of horror to them forever.

Those two days passed all too quickly for Charis and Craig, although to me they seemed to drag intolerably. On the third day we would return to the Soo, where Charis and I were to leave the "Nirvana." I had half expected Charis or Charis to suggest a change in our plans, but again I had failed to understand them. They both realized that the end must come soon. This torturing happiness of theirs could not last; sooner or later a change must come over the spirit of their dream. And that they could not endure. Better to part now, while they loved each other so perfectly, and live for the rest of their lives on the memory of that love.

But as the second day passed I could feel the tension increasing. That look of childlike happiness was no longer in their eyes, and though they sat side by side all day they spoke scarcely at all. So I knew that they were approaching that great third wave.

We had supper on deck that evening, just at sunset, and as usual we lingered at the table after we had finished. It was a gorgeous evening and all the world was golden with the glory of the sun that was gone.

Craig was nervously fingering an unused spoon. Finally he picked it up and began playfully to rap Charis' fingers, lightly at first, then harder. Charis winced, but she kept on smiling and I knew that she liked him to hurt her. I have never forgotten the look on her face, nor that on Craig's. He did not lift his eyes from her fingers, but there was agony in his twisted lips. I could not bear to watch him.

As for his parents, they didn't even notice; to them all this was children's play.

At last Craig laid down the spoon and looked at Charis with hot, unsmiling eyes.

"There'll be a splendid view of the moonrise from that hill," he said steadily, nodding toward the shore. "Want to go over and watch it?"

The great third wave was sweeping toward them. They looked at each other gravely.

"Will you come with me?" Craig asked again, and Charis answered,

"Yes."

He looked at his watch.

"The moon will rise in about half an hour," he told her. "We'd better get to work on the dishes."

There was no laughter in the galley that evening. They worked swiftly and silently, and were soon back on deck. Charis climbed onto the bow and began to play with a length of chain that lay there, while Craig went back to lower the dinghy.

There was silence on the "Nirvana," broken only by the swish of the waves and the creaking of the davits as Craig worked with the dinghy in which he and Charis were to go ashore. Mr. and Mrs. Forrester sat on, placid and comfortable, watching the sunset.

CHARIS stood up. She had wrapped the heavy chain about her wrists.

"This reminds me of the slave dances they used to teach us at school," she said, lifting her arms above her head. "Like this," and she began to move to and fro on the deck, clanking her chains as she danced.

The dinghy touched the water and Craig stood erect on the stern of the "Nirvana," graceful and splendid against the fading sky. Up at the bow, Charis was swaying like a blue shadow in the twilight. Still dancing, she moved backwards until her heel touched the edge of the deck. There she stood poised for an instant, looking across at Craig. Then her ankle turned sharply, as if by accident; she flung up her arms and vanished, her wrists still tangled in that chain.



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Ornate Blue
and Solitaire

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By Edna Wallace Hopper

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The three of us nearest to her were completely taken by surprise; even I, with all my sense of foreboding, had never dreamed of this. But Craig passed us like a whirlwind and dove in deeply from the bow. Then at last we recovered our senses and hurried forward, dumb with horror. After an eternity of intolerable suspense, Craig reappeared, alone. Someone groaned—I don't know who; perhaps it was myself. Then Craig was gone again.

The time passed; seconds as long as years; and we waited, breathless, while the mocking water lapped the bow. At last Craig's hand appeared, gripping our anchor chain. His other arm held Charis, limp and white.

It was several minutes before she revived. When at last her eyes opened, it was Craig's face that they sought.

"Craig," she whispered.

"Charis!" He was kneeling beside her. Gently and reverently he kissed her lips.

They had passed the great third wave. Their love was safe.

As I turned away I saw the golden moon riding upon the hills.

That was the end. The next morning was dreadful to me, like those days when someone has died and has not yet been buried. But if Craig and Charis were

suffering they gave no sign of it. They were very calm, these two who had broken their hearts for their hearts' own sake. They sat together, talking quietly, sometimes even smiling. They were so sure of themselves now—so sure of their love. They had fought the fight. They had kept the faith . . .

CRAIG came with us to the steamer by which we were to leave for home. At the door of our stateroom he and Charis shook hands, smiling.

"Good-by, Craig."

"Good-by, Charis."

Then he was gone.

Charis stood quite still, and smiled uncertainly at the place where he had stood. When she turned there was a lost look in her eyes. I held out my arms and she crumpled into them, sobbing.

For a long time I held her, till at last she grew quiet from sheer exhaustion. And though my heart ached for her, I was filled with a new happiness. Charis had come to me for comfort. Now, for the first time in all our life together, Charis needed me. Now when she had given all her love to another man, Charis was more nearly mine than ever before.



The Mother Who Went to Heaven

[Continued from page 33]

that was the town children's delight. There I let him pick out a little bat that was better than Jimmy Smith's by twenty-five cents. I watched him start home, proudly carrying the bat, and swinging it at an imaginary ball every few yards with all the strength of his six years. Then I went to Judge Stevens' office in the Town Hall.

The Judge asked no questions when I said I wanted him to sell my house and store. Somehow, the way he kept gazing out of the window that looked down on the sleepy little street, made me realize that Judge Stevens had been expecting such a request from me. I suppose he had guessed from the first that things would end the way they were ending.

YOU say your clerk, Albert, can run things until I find a buyer. H'm, he's a good reliable man in the store, John?"

"Always found him so, Judge. He's run the place mighty well when I've been away at times. He was with my father before he died, and taught me lots about the business when I had to give up my law course and take over the store—"

"H'mn, John, I might invest in that store myself," he answered.

Before I left we struck a bargain, the Judge deciding to see if Albert Johnson couldn't run it at a nice profit. When we were shaking hands the Judge asked the one and only question about my personal affairs.

"You're going away, John?"

"Yes—sir, this evening. On the fifteen," I told him, looking out of the window.

"We'll always be friends, John. We'll always be. Remember that, boy," he said, a strange, ghostly sort of smile on his kindly face.

"I won't forget, Judge," I gulped going away.

I found Billy playing base-ball with Jimmy and some other little fellows near home. Lizzie, the colored girl, seemed as if she were seeing ghosts when I told her in a low voice to go home and get all of Billy's things out so I could pack them in a trunk and valise . . . Later, after I taught Billy how to hold his new bat, I went to the house and got my own things

together. A wagon came to the door and hauled trunk and valise down to the railroad station. Then I sent Lizzie after Billy. He returned with her, protesting. When he saw me home at that time of day, surprise seemed to steal his voice away.

* * * * *

"Is Mama coming today?"

"Sh, Billy, you mustn't talk so loud at the table," I warned him, glancing around the boarding house's dining-room to see if the others had heard my boy's question. It was the morning after Helen's going away, and we were in a little Tennessee town, having arrived late the previous night. I had gotten Billy to sleep after twelve only by vaguely promising that his mother might join us in the morning. Now, with the spring sunshine glowing outside in the streets that were strange and perplexing to Billy—because he had always childishly thought that Main Street at home was the only street in the world—his little mind would not take vague promises.

"But, you said she might come today—this morning? Isn't she?" he insisted, knitting his blond brows.

"I don't know for sure, yet. But, here, don't you want your melon? It looks so good. And, do you want eggs? Let's see, I think Mama always gave you medium boiled eggs, didn't she?"

IT'S a good melon . . . But I'm not hungry, Daddy—"

"You didn't eat any supper on the train. You've got to eat, Billy, or you'll get sick," I said, frightening myself more at this thought than I did Billy. Billy had always been a healthy child. We'd had practically no experience with him as a sick baby or boy. I'd never know what to do for him in case—

"Will she be here for dinner?" his mind turning back once more to the subject nearest his heart. He wanted his mother. What was I to tell him? I couldn't keep on promising forever. He would fret himself too much over promises. But, the table was no place to tell him anything about his mother one way



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and would give me anything I asked for. I'm going to ask Him for my Mama tonight. And, if—if He don't send her back, I'll—I'll—" the thought that she might not come back in the morning choked other words back into his tightening little throat.

"Billy," I hastened to say before something stifled my own voice. I couldn't let him be angry with God when morning came and no Mother. No, Billy must always believe that. God had taken her for some beautiful reason. "You see," I went on, groping rather blindly for words, "God only calls a few mothers to Heaven like He did our Mama. He calls only the sweetest, the most beautiful and the best. He—He—well, He calls them to help Him make Heaven so we'll like it when we go there, Billy." I finished.

WHEN are we going there, Daddy? Soon?"

Again I tried to explain that we would go as soon as God was ready for us. He seemed to half-understand that we were only waiting on earth for a Voice; seemed to think that we would go off to the skies as quickly as we had left our own home; seemed to like this last idea best of all for it suggested going to his mother at once. This, and the idea that his mother was always watching him from her place, and waiting with her soft arms open and ready to hug him to her, he liked best of all!

Nor can I tell you what torture burned in my being as I told these things to my son—these things that would forever shield the memory of his mother. Some day, of course, he would understand that she was dead. But, Death was too incomprehensible... too cold and heart-breaking a thing to try and explain to ten years old. It was best that he only thought she had gone up to the bright blue skies. But, surely you must understand that every word made the break in my own heart a trifle bigger, if such a thing were possible. Surely you must realize that the constant knowledge of Helen's being in another man's arms, instead of being in Heaven, was eating out my very soul.

"Then, we've got to wait awhile. That's why we've come here, isn't it, Daddy? We came to wait for God to call us up there. Gee! Daddy, I wish we could see her up there like she sees us down here. I want to see her so bad—"

"You mustn't cry that way, Billy," I pleaded, noticing the big tears gathering in his eyes, and hearing the first sob in his throat; "it'd make Mother feel bad if she saw you crying—" I knew I couldn't stand to hear him cry. His sobs always went through me like a knife.

Billy brushed his eyes at these words, swallowing the lumps that had been bothering his throat. He climbed down out of my arms just as if he understood that we could go; that everything had been settled.

I HADN'T noticed the fact that day was drawing to a close until we left the stony ledge and became sort of swallowed by the shadows of the downward trail. It was a steep grade, and in the gathering shadows Billy found it difficult to keep his footing, although he was hanging on to my hand for dear life. After he nearly tripped once I lifted him to my shoulders. We hardly made five steps in this fashion when a stone rolled from under my foot, unbalancing me. I wavered unsteadily for a second on one foot; then plunged head foremost down the grade, flinging out a hand to try and break the inevitable fall. Somehow—in his fright, I suppose—little Billy squirmed out of my grasp. Before I crashed into the stony ground I heard his scream of pain. When I

righted myself and bent over him he was moaning, his blue eyes upturned pitifully appealing to me. A red stain was spreading through his hair, and from the way he held his left shoulder I knew that it was seriously injured.

All the way down the mountainside he moaned feebly for his mother. I carried him slowly, unmindful of the burning pain in my right ankle. Every little sound that escaped his lips tortured me. I had bound up his head with my shirt and the rough bandage stopped the blood somewhat. But, not enough to keep from weakening him so much that he fainted just before I reached a doctor's office.

* * * * *

The doctor told me the truth from the first. It was going to be a hard fight to save my boy. His head had received a terrible blow. It was sort of a severe concussion plus a nasty wound. And his shoulder had been broken! We secured a furnished cottage and a nurse.

Poor little Billy only made strange little heart-breaking sounds with his white twitching lips for the first three days and nights—days and nights during which they could not drag me from his bedside.

I was waiting for his heavy and feverish eyelids to lift for the first time. And, to hear the first coherent words from his lips, although I knew with the surety of destiny what they would be. They would be pleas for his Mama.

When his eyelids finally fluttered open and he called for her, I had to turn away so the doctor and nurse would not know the truth. For, you see, I had just let them assume Helen was dead.

"Mama—Mama—" he murmured several times while the nurse tried to ssh and soothe him, because he was too weak and spent to try to talk. And they were afraid excitement would increase his fever. The fever in itself was a dangerous element of his complications. Doctor Green told me it could easily burn him up in his exhausted condition. But, no amount of persuasion on anyone's part could still his cries for Helen.

THE Doctor asked me outside for a moment. He said in a strained sort of voice that little Billy would ruin his chances by fretting for his mother.

"The boy's in a mild state of delirium caused by pain and weakness. He would hardly be able to detect the hoax if we promised him his mother—and then got someone to come and play the rôle. It seems the only way, Mr. Hunter. We've got to build him up if he's to recover from the injuries—"

"There's his mother's sister. She—she looks a lot like Mrs. Hunter used to," I broke in, thinking of Milly. Surely she would come to help us save little Billy. She had no children of her own. Yes, I was sure she would rush to us.

"Send for her. A's not far from here. She could get here by tomorrow night," he directed.

Of course, if I had known where to find Helen in such a crisis I wouldn't have hesitated telegraphing for her at once. But, there was no way in God's name for me to know. She had gone away after the fashion of women who leave home with a lover—in utter secrecy.

I promised my boy that his mother was coming to him the next day. For a moment his fever-lit eyes seemed to become natural. A tiny ghost of a smile flitted over his wan lips. Then the bright stare returned, and his mouth taunted from the numb pain of his plaster-casted shoulder. But, just that little second of relaxation was a sign to the physician. He said that the rise was going to be beneficial.

"Sickness, you know," he confided,

when I went out with him to send Milly the urgent wire, "is always partly of the heart and mind. Courage and confidence are needed to pull lots of cases through. A little child gets this courage and confidence through his mother. Billy has an even chance now if your sister is a successful impersonator. . . ."

* * * * *

It was not Milly who came in answer to my request—but, Helen! Standing there on the little station platform the sight of her coming toward me made everything go around in circles; made my breath come and go in gasps; struck my tongue dumb for the moment.

"How—how is he?" she asked, stopping a few inches from me, her beautiful face trying to be a mask for whatever was going on inside of her. I'm sure my face was no mask. I couldn't hide my surprise—and whatever other reactions her sudden appearance created. I made a little empty sort of gesture with my hands first, finally groping toward the little black bag she carried. For a fleeting second my fingers grazed over her hand. The touch was electrical. It loosened my tongue.

"He's holding on, Helen," I answered, my eyes avoiding hers. I couldn't bear looking into eyes that were no longer able to look clearly and bravely into mine. Of course she couldn't do such a thing—not after running away with another man and leaving her boy and husband to do for themselves.

So I led her to the waiting automobile, my eyes on the cracks of the station's wooden platform. As we sped along in silence I wondered at her presence. How she'd found out about Billy. But, since she made no effort to explain, I was nonplussed. However, we must have an understanding on account of the doctor. He was waiting at the house for us—waiting with Billy and the nurse.

IT WAS the doctor's suggestion that we get someone to make-believe in the rôle of his mother. He assumes you're dead. Since I didn't know where you were, I wired Milly. I'll have to tell him the truth now," I said.

Helen only nodded looking down the white road upon which the twilight shadows were already thickening. At the house she wanted to go right into Billy. But Doctor Green suggested waiting until the shadows deepened so that the chances of deception would be better.

"He's unexpectedly grown a little less rational in the last hour. Twice he asked questions that—"

"But, Doctor," broke in Helen, her lips quivering for the first time since she had arrived, "I'm his own real mother. He'll know me—"

"Oh!" was all the doctor said. He didn't even look at me surprisedly. Doctors are that way, you know. They understand a great deal about human beings as well as about medicine and surgery.

Helen tip-toed into the room. I could not resist following her. She seemed only the mother of our boy—my wife—my sweetheart. I'm sure it was the vision of her slender graceful body moving through the dimness of the room, and the gleam of her black hair, that made me forget the chasm she had placed between us.

Billy did not see us enter at first, because the cast made him lie in bed with his face turned away from the door. He was resting quietly as his mother came into his line of vision. She quickly dropped to her knees beside him. The expected cry of "Mama" did not break from his lips. Nor he did not make a move or sound. It was just as if the

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Sixty days ago it made me boiling mad. Today I look back and laugh at the incident for it brought me a marvelous new growth of hair.

WHEN my wife began to look sorrowfully at my thinning hair I smiled regretfully. When my friends began to call me "baldy" I felt annoyed. But when my secretary began to look at my glistening scalp and snicker—well it made me mad!

But the worst was yet to come. About sixty days ago I saw a tooth paste advertisement that offered to send a free booklet. I clipped the coupon and gave it to my secretary to fill in and mail.

Well, a few days later, to my utter surprise I found on my desk—not a booklet on toothpaste—but a booklet telling how to grow hair in 30 days!

I glanced from the booklet to my secretary. I felt my blood boiling. "Miss Harris," I said to her, "I can't say that I appreciate your sense of humor. Just what is your idea?"

She paled. "Why, Mr. Burns—what's wrong?"

"Wrong?" I shouted, "what's the idea of sending me this hint about my hair?"

Tears came into her eyes. And between sobs she explained why it wasn't her fault.

She said that the coupon I asked her to mail had another coupon printed on the back—and the other coupon offered to send a free book about baldness. Well, she simply used her own judgment!

"H'm," was all I could say.

That night on my way home I read the book about baldness. It described an entirely new method of making hair grow—perfected by Alois Merke, founder of the Merke Institute, Fifth Avenue, New York. It is the only treatment I ever heard of that reached right down to the hair roots and awakened them.

As I read on I felt myself weakening in my resolve not to try another hair treatment. And then when I read that Merke actually guaranteed a new growth of hair in 30 days or no cost—well, I sent for the treatment.

The first two or three days, nothing happened. But a week or so later when I looked in the mirror I saw something that almost bowled me over! For there, just breaking through, was a fine downy fuzz all over my head.

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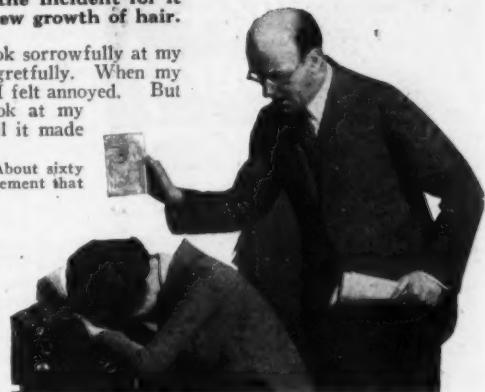
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ing fluid" on the leaves. Yet that is what I had been doing, when I used to douse my head with ordinary tonics, salves, etc. To make a tree grow you must nourish the roots. That's exactly what the Merke treatment does.

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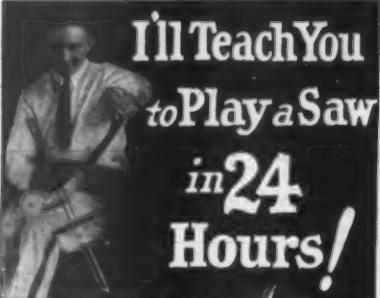
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nurse had come in to feed him broth or give him more fever medicine.

"Billy, my poor little darling," murmured Helen, her hands straying over the little white mound of covers carefully lest she cause him pain. Her voice was like a hand tugging at my heart strings. It must have sounded deep into little Billy's consciousness, for he turned ever so slightly. But, even in the dusk, I could see the sort of blank expression in his fevered eyes. He did not recognize her. "It's Mama, Billy—I've come to—to help you get well," Helen whispered, leaning toward him.

Billy's lips struggled open. At first what he said was only a blurring sort of sound in the room. But, at last I caught words—feeble little words. He was saying:

"No'm, you're not. My Mama's gone to Heaven. My Daddy told me so—"

Helen's head seemed suddenly to bow down upon the bed as if she had been struck a heavy blow. I tried to say something in a low voice,—something about God having sent his mother back to him. But my tongue only made unintelligible sounds such as Helen was making on her knees. It was only little Billy who possessed the power of speech:

"Did she send you? She knows I'm sick. I saw her looking down from Heaven at me. She looks through the window there."

My eyes wandered to the window opposite his bed. I saw the tender gold of stars gleaming through the deepening dark; saw a tiny slice of yellow moon brightening in the shrouding skies. When I returned my glances to the bedside Helen was looking up at me. The shadows of the room hid her beautiful face. But, they could not dim the light in her eyes. It was a light of gratitude; a gleam of thanks; and a sign that she understood how I had shielded her to her boy.

"Yes, Billy, she sent me," she answered at last. "She sent me to tell you she was coming back from Heaven in the morning."

"I hurt so much sometimes. I—I think I'm going up to Heaven too," he cut in, his words making me swallow hard.

"Ssh, darling," gulped Helen. "You must rest easy now and be feeling fine for mother's coming in the morning."

"Sit in the window so I can look at you a while," he begged. Helen kissed him with emotion she had to restrain, and sat in the chair I placed near the window for her.

I went out then. The doctor and nurse tip-toed in. When Doctor Green came out with a word of hope, and left, promising to return early in the morning, I followed him into the night. I walked and walked in the cool half-light of stars and baby moon, with every precious word and gesture of the past hour living things in my heart and soul.

I TRIED with all my will power to forget anything had happened to estrange Helen and me. But, ugly memories drifted out of the night shadows tormenting me with an inescapable fact. In some way Helen had learned through Milly of Billy's danger, and mother-love had torn her away from Sandford for the time being. She had shattered the past and the future by going away with him. The present would only last as long as circumstances demanded it. When Billy was well again, Helen would go back to her lover. What else was there to do?

Returning to the little cottage where tender Life was struggling against hardened Death. I was drawn by some irresistible power to the window where Helen sat near Billy's bedside. For one deathless instant my heart seemed to

mend at the sight of her, slimly silhouetted by the moonlight against the window. Then it throbbed with pain again. I covered my contorting face with trembling hands and stumbled away.

* * * * *

It became a heart-breaking, and nerve-wearing struggle against a merciless enemy, for seemingly interminable days, but skill and love battled, and triumphed.

Billy was on the mend.

The fever died down. His little mind cleared. There was no doubt but that he would come through with flying colors. Rarely ever did he let his mother go out of calling distance. As his demand for her increased, foreshadowing his need of her in the days to come, I began to worry over the end of it all. For not a word or gesture of reconciliation had passed between us.

WHAT would we do when he entirely recovered? Surely then would come the inevitable parting of the ways. But, suppose he demanded that his mother remain? Suppose his happiness came to hinge on her presence? Could I let him go with her to the man she had taken in my place? Could I spend the rest of my life with hunger for my boy gnawing into my heart like a sharp instrument?

These were the questions that drummed in my ears day and night during his convalescence—days teeming with golden sunshine—nights grained with dancing stars and summer moons. If I prayed to God to paralyze my memory once, I must have begged Him to do so a thousand times. If only I could forget Helen had done the unforgivable! If only she had not crossed the divide that is impossible to recross! Had I been able to forget what a gulf lay between us there would never have been any question of the future. Helen would have stayed—by main force, if necessary.

Sometimes there are questions that can be answered only by Fate. Mine seemed to be of such calibre. Fate in this case came in the person of a little boy whose pale cheeks were daily pinking with the ruddiness of returning health.

Helen was feeding him one evening when he suddenly gestured his supper away, the light of a sudden thought burning in his blue eyes. If you know children, you know that once a question rises in their hearts, it must be settled at once. A question had come to little Billy's boy heart; one that was to pass through our hearts like knives.

"Mama, you're not going back to Heaven, are you?" he questioned anxiously, his hands reaching up to take hers.

Silence followed. Somehow it seemed that Carlton T. Sandford glided phantom-like into the room upon the heels of that silence, filling it with his detested presence.

"You're not, are you, Mama?" insisted Billy, seemingly afraid of the silence. "I don't want you to go back to Heaven. We need you more'n God does. Don't we, Daddy? You don't want her to ever go back to Heaven, do you, Daddy?"

Again that awful silence. But, this time an invisible, soundless voice spoke in my heart at the sight of the agitation that possessed Helen's bosom; her tortured upturned face; the fluttering of her slim fingers over Billy's. And in that instant my memories seemed unreal—the products of an ugly dream. A phantom left the room.

"No, Billy," I whispered hoarsely, my eyes trying to look into his and Helen's at the same time. "We—we—don't want her to go back to Heaven—"

"Hear that, Mama?" he cried, triumph

in his voice. "Promise, you won't go back. Promise!" he begged.

A sob broke between her lips for an answer. Tears were blinding my eyes as I saw her nodding her head in a promise.

* * * * *

Billy was sleeping soundly, she said, finding me in the little garden where I had been sitting for hours trying to realize what I had brought upon us for Billy's sake. I got up and offered her the chair. But, like myself, she preferred to stand. Since Helen had come to me I knew there was something she wanted to say so I waited. It seemed to be a great effort for her lips to keep from twitching; and, a greater effort yet to keep her slim hands from twisting in and out of themselves.

"Of course," she began, her voice stumbling, "I know you only said that back there for—for his sake. I've always appreciated your shielding me to him. He might have grown up to hate me—even to curse me," she said, her slender, lovely shoulders trembling slightly.

THREE was nothing else for me to do," I answered slowly, knowing then that I loved Helen for what she had been to me with a deathless love. If only I could have forgotten then as I had at the sound of little Billy's plea. If only memories would die!

"No, there was nothing else for you to do. But, I wonder was it best? I wonder? Will he soon realize in his child's way that things are not the same—that I've brought a terrible shadow into all of our lives? Can we go on playing a game for his sake with the barrier I placed between us always there?" Her voice had become steadier. She seemed under control. I decided to find out then what had never been explained.

"Helen, how did you come to get news of our boy's danger? You went away leaving no word as to where you were going. How did you know?"

For an immediate answer one of her hands fished down into the bosom of her dress. She drew out a folded newspaper clipping. Moonlight made the night bright enough for me to read the printed words. At first I did not understand. Then a light began to break upon me. The newspaper account, dated two days before Helen's runaway from home, gave a sensational account of the arrest in Nashville, Tennessee, of Edward Wheeler alias Carlton T. Sandford on a charge of embezzlement. It said he had long evaded arrest because of hiding away at Yulee House in our quiet community.

I WENT to Nashville to join him. I found him in jail. I thought I loved him until that moment. I would have gone back to you and Billy, but I had given you every reason to believe I'd put an eternal barrier between us. I had followed a man who had fascinated me... blinded me to everything I'd believed in all my life... I went home to my folks in A—. I wanted time to try and figure a way out of it all. Then your telegram came to Milly—"

"Then—then—" I broke in, hope flooding through my heart seeming to magically mend the breaks, "you never joined Sandford at all. He—he was in jail. You never really went to him?"

"Only in my heart, dear. But—you must remember I was willing to have stepped beyond the line once... I would have if—if—"

"But, you didn't. Oh, Helen! Don't you understand what that means? It means everything—that we need no longer play a game before Billy. That is, if you—if you—"

"John," she returned, using my name for the first time, "I love you."

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Fighting for Time

[Continued from page 49]

But I learned that Sammy hadn't forgotten. Almost in seconds he came—though bulking so big I scarcely knew him—elbowing his way through the throng. And with, "Danny, my boy! Danny, you're the most welcome sight in years," he fairly pumped my hand in both his. Then, throwing an arm affectionately across my shoulder, he hurried me to his inner office.

Assistants attended to his business for the remainder of that afternoon, while we talked over the old days, what I had done and was doing, what he had accomplished. And he also told me something I had not known. The wife he had married a few years before had died, leaving him a little daughter.

"Leila is her name, Danny boy. She is wonderful, and looks like her mother. You shall see her tonight. She is all I have. But she is enough to make life worth the living. It is for her I am working very hard. Never will she be denied anything she wants." The emotion in his tones told the rest of the story. The child was the heart of his world.

AT DINNER he pretended to scold me, insisting I had deserted him; that I could have located him any time had I wished. On the other hand, he said, he had tried to find me after leaving college, but had failed to pick up my trail.

"But you're not going to get away from me again, Danny," he finished with a chuckle. "You are coming with me to be my right-hand man. No, don't shake your head. I mean it. You always were my only real friend. I need you now, more than ever; someone I can trust absolutely. You shall name your own figure. No more talk about it tonight. Tomorrow we will complete arrangements."

And Sammy Landau had his way. I tried to decline, pleading the demands of my own business venture. But he would not take my refusal. Within a month I was working for him, and at a salary out of proportion to any service I could render at the outset.

But he taught me his game, personally. And his coaching and forcing soon made me of real use to him. Then, for fifteen years, I was his confidant, the one among his employees with whom he was on terms of intimacy.

"Come, Dan, snap out of it. What's troubling you?" The query, sudden and rasping, fairly jumped me from my reverie. Sam, his papers signed and pushed aside, sat peering at me through narrowed lids.

"Nothing. Just thinking while you worked. But it was you who sent for me. I thought the trouble was at this end of the line."

"You bet it is, or I wouldn't have brought you on from Washington. Have you heard any gossip since you got in?"

"Not a peep. Came straight here. Anything seriously wrong?"

"Rather." Sam's features set themselves into hard lines. "Geoffrey Reynolds has got himself into the worst scrape he ever was in."

"I might have guessed it was Geoff. What now? Another bat or more gambling troubles?"

"Worse. He got himself married on Sunday."

"What?"
"You heard me. After being in hot water so often that any other producer would have fired him long ago, the idiot has broken his contract with me to remain single. If the news ever reaches the theatre going public, fifty per cent of his

value as a leading man is totally gone." "But the girl—his wife. Do I know her?"

Sam nodded. "She's little Mitzi Karl, the one girl in all my choruses whom I would have banked on to have more sense than to marry an irresponsible fool like Reynolds. Yes, the girl you and I have been planning to give a part next year, to start along the road toward leads."

"Sam, you and I know Mitzi well. She's a square shooter. I hope you don't believe she married Geoff believing his influence would help her."

For just an instant Sam's look softened. He shook his head. "No. I sized that girl for the real goods the day I gave her a job. She hasn't disappointed me. She's on the level, and clever besides. If it was such a case as you suggest, I'd split them up and soon get them divorced. But, hang it, I can't."

"Come clean, Sam."

"I've had them up here; talked with them. And, Dan, I believe they're really in love with each other. I don't know what to do. That's why I sent for you."

"But you must have some plan in mind."

"Only this. News of the marriage must be kept secret—at least until the end of this show's run. Why, it would queer everything if people ever got wise that the leading man had married one of the chorus girls."

"And you want me to—"

"Go and see them. You always had more influence with Reynolds than anyone else. And Mitzi is one of your particular protégés. Impress upon them the loss it means at the box office if this marriage leaks out. Why, half the women who come to the show do so to see this good-looking imbecile, Geoffrey, with his happy-go-lucky style of doing things. Single, he's a heart breaker. But married—honesty, Dan, I ought to fire both of them."

"But you won't."

His eyes narrowed shrewdly. "No. The piece would die standing up if I let Reynolds go now. I may fire him at the end of the season, or I may put them in separate companies. But, anyway, I'm going to hang fast to Mitzi. That little girl is a positive genius. Some day she'll be the greatest comedienne on Broadway or I don't know the show business. I've only been holding her back because she's so young; needed more experience. And now—"

I HEADED straight for Geoffrey's apartment, just to the north of the theatrical district near Central Park, with my thoughts in considerable of a jumble. Unquestionably he was the most popular leading man in musical comedy in the country; had been, in fact, ever since Landau brought him from London three years previous. Not only had he a fine voice, but he danced along as if born with the gift. Though slight in build, he was able to wear clothes as if they were made on him, and he was the kind of a good-looking he-male who, though he set all the women's hearts to pounding, drew no knocks from the men. You simply couldn't see him on or off the stage without putting him down instantly as a good fellow.

And that was his worst fault—being a good fellow. He refused to take himself or his work seriously. He would rather be with a bunch of his kind, drinking, gambling and telling stories, than to hear all the applause in the world. And his frequent lapses, his repeated failures to appear at the theatre—compelling an understudy to play his rôle—had given Sam

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many periods of worry and disappointment.

Mitzi, less than two years in the chorus, was a pretty, little sprite, who not only could sing and dance, but possessed a real sense of comedy. She was one of the hardest working girls I ever encountered, taking her job most seriously; constantly striving to improve.

How these two, practically opposites in their natures, ever had fallen sufficiently in love to get married, was a riddle beyond my ability to solve.

The jerk of the taxicab as it stopped at the curb outside the building in which Geoffrey's apartment was located, snapped me from my thoughts. And in Reynolds' quarters I found them, playing at house-keeping, even he accepting the rôle of husband with a seriousness utterly foreign to his accustomed self.

I remained with them for hours, discussing the situation from every angle, explaining Landau's position in the matter and what he expected of them. And, as one who long had been a sort of big brother to them, I talked intimately of their future and the wonderful possibilities which lay ahead, particularly in a theatrical way, provided there was real team work.

Any doubts which I may have entertained concerning their mutual affection disappeared long before the interview terminated. There were earnestness and sincerity in everything they said, in their frequently repeated pledges to stand shoulder to shoulder in an effort to help one another. And they explained that they had deliberately kept the secret of their courtship from their companions that they might be certain of themselves before even a hint that they contemplated marriage leaked out.

WHEN I left them it was with the understanding that they would remain away from the cabarets and other night resorts and do nothing to attract particular attention to themselves—at least until the close of the season.

I did not tell them of Sam's plan to separate them later on, placing them in different companies if the marriage gained such publicity as to detract from Geoffrey's drawing powers at the box office. No need to do anything to mar their present happiness. And, I hoped, the bridge never would have to be crossed.

However, I was too experienced not to realize that news of the marriage of a man as widely acquainted as Reynolds was bound to become gossip through the White Light district, no matter to what lengths the principals went to keep their secret. So I did the only thing possible to hold such gossip to a minimum. In turn I went to each of the local newspaper offices, placed all my cards face up upon the table and obtained the pledge of each managing editor to print nothing concerning the wedding. This was not particularly difficult once they understood that any publication of the facts would greatly injure our business. Besides, there was no percentage for any of them to disoblige a man like Landau, whose expenditures for advertising in the course of a year ran into the hundreds of thousands.

From the outset of their domestic life, matters ran quite smoothly for Geoffrey and his little wife. Once or twice he lapsed, drinking more than he should. But he never again failed to appear in time to play his rôle. Sam and I watched him closely, and soon came to the conclusion that he was taking more interest in his work than ever in the past. Of course this pleased Landau. And, as the marriage, after being tattled along Broadway for a week or two, appeared to be forgotten, he finally gave his approval to a suggestion of mine that Mitzi and Geoffrey be kept



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together in the company which would appear in the following season's big musical show.

Then came the vacation period; for them a honeymoon.

* * * * *

During the summer Sam decided upon a new scheme for his big, Number 1 company. It had been his custom to rehearse in New York, then open in one of the New England cities, and return to the metropolis for the Broadway premier after a week or two on the road. The plan upon which he fixed was to train the company in Chicago and play there for a full month. After that a jump would be made straight to New York, where the show would open about October first for a long fall and winter run.

HIS argument was that two weeks of jumps between cities on the "try-out route" tired his performers, and they were not in the best of form when they made their Manhattan debut. Whereas, a four-weeks' run in the Mid-Western metropolis would enable him to trim and alter the show until it was as near perfection as possible.

"The Rollicking Prince" was the name of the new offering, and Geoffrey was cast for the title rôle, with songs and dances especially arranged to afford the most opportunity for him.

But what interested me most was that Sam rewarded Mitzi's two seasons of hard work by giving her a real part—even though the lines she was to speak were few and she had but one song, a bit of humorous verse with a catchy refrain.

I long had agreed with my chief that she was clever, bound to win an important post for herself behind the footlights some day. But I was not prepared for the ability she displayed at rehearsal. Not only did she dance like a whirlwind, but she put across her little song with such a touch of comedy genius that Sam joined her with fellow players in applauding her efforts.

"Dan," he said to me aside, after the third day of preliminary work, "the girl is cleverer than we guessed. She's got the personality and dash which will sweep everything before her, will make her one of the show's genuine hits. I'm going to have some more verses written for her. There'll be so many demands for encores that she'll need them."

The first week of the play's Chicago run brought with it such bitterness and disappointment—tragedy, from a theatrical viewpoint—as I hope never to experience again. Sam, with an unusually lavish hand even for him, did his share toward making the show one of the outstanding efforts of his career. It was Geoffrey Reynolds who prevented the fulfillment of his dream. And to have the fruits of his months of labor snatched from him when they were almost within his grasp—and by one whom he had pampered beyond his deserts—almost transformed him into a madman.

THE play had been press-agented and advertised to the limit. The theatre was practically sold out well in advance for the first two weeks, and when the orchestra filed into the pit for the premier's overture, every seat was occupied and standing room was at a premium. It surely was a gala occasion, and those out front were eager to add their applause to the evening's festivities.

Behind stage, however, matters were far less serene. Mitzi arrived early, but without her husband. He had left her in the afternoon, promising to rejoin her at supper. But he had not done so. She feared something had happened to him, and begged me and others of her friends to find him. Her quivering lips and the dread in her

eyes betrayed that she, like ourselves, suspected the worst. Our search was unsuccessful.

However, about five minutes before the scheduled time for the show to begin, Geoffrey appeared, intoxicated and surly. We held the curtain while we endeavored to sober him with coffee, and forced him into his costume. The tantalizing situation made the entire company nervous, and the tension was communicated to those out front, who frequently manifested their impatience by outbursts of hand-clapping. But we did not signal the musicians until he had so far recovered that we believed he would be able to go through with his rôle, after a fashion.

Sam had left the stage immediately after hearing Mitzi's story; and remained closeted in an inner office in another portion of the theatre. Never a man of even temper, Geoffrey's backsiding on such an important occasion had stirred the worst in his nature to the point of fury.

Had Geoff been at his best, "The Rollicking Prince" would have scored one of Landau's greatest successes. Never had the actor been given such a "soft" part, so many good lines and numbers. But he failed to pull himself together. He was dull and listless. His efforts were so obviously forced that the audience turned cold against him and, contrary to all precedent, there were but few encores when he sang.

However, the others of the company battled bravely to overcome the handicap; to put the show across. And among those who worked hardest was game, little Mitzi, fighting as only a performer can fight against heart breaking misery—which must be concealed. She started the audience laughing when she first appeared; she kept them roaring with her song and clowning. And, by the time she was permitted to leave the stage, she had convinced everyone in front of and behind the footlights that "Lucky" Landau had uncovered another genuine "find."

IN THE newspaper criticisms the following morning the show, as a whole, was praised. But Geoffrey received the pan-ning he deserved. However, Sam and I, reading the notice together, realized "The Rollicking Prince" had received a body blow. For, with the leading man, long the outstanding idol of musical comedy, pronounced a "frost" in print, we felt almost certain disaster faced us. The roasting of Geoffrey was certain to reach the New York papers and be published there. Sam avoided Reynolds throughout the remainder of the Chicago run.

I went to Geoffrey before the second performance, tried to rouse his better nature, make him realize how unfairly he had treated his employer and his fellow players. And Mitzi, almost at the breaking point, did her utmost to help me, urging him to buck up, to make a new fight to redeem himself.

For the time being, though, he appeared to have lost his nerve completely. Never was a man more contrite. He was ashamed of himself, and admitted it. Still he tried to explain. He had kept off the liquor for weeks while the new show was in rehearsal. For he realized he was being given his greatest opportunity and what the success of the piece would mean to Mitzi. Then, for the first time in his career, he became nervous, dreaded to face the opening night's audience. He had slipped away from his wife for a few hours before curtain time, intending to take a drink or two to "steady" himself. But, once he began drinking, he never knew when to stop. The two were the beginning of his downfall. I understood and believed him. But I knew better than to repeat any such excuse to Sam.



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But right there he displayed a fighting spirit which I had not given him credit. He admitted it would be difficult for him to obtain company employment for a time. But he refused to run away; leave the country. He was certain he was sufficiently well known to obtain some big time vaudeville bookings. Anyway, he would try to break into the two-a-day with a sketch which he would have written for himself and Mitzi.

And it was with that understanding and my assurance that I would do my best to interest some of the vaudeville higher-ups in them, that we parted. If Fate only had tossed them a four-leaf clover right then, they might have carried through the scheme. But the cards were stacked against them.

SCOTT, though a good performer, was not a Reynolds. And though Sam tried three girls in Mitzi's part, none made the hit she had in the West. The critics passed over the opening performance in Manhattan with but faint praise. And, after a six-weeks' run to negative business, Sam closed the show and pocketed a big financial loss. At such times he made little open complaint, though I knew how it hurt him to drop money in considerable sums. And when, coupled with a big deficit was the failure of an enterprise upon which he had spent much time and thought, and which deserved to win, I guessed how he was seething inside. It was not long before I learned his real feelings.

"Listen, Dan," he said when we were alone in his office a few nights after the remnants of "The Rolling Prince" had been carted to storage, "for all the trouble I am in just now, one man is responsible—Geoffrey Reynolds. I am going to break him if it takes all my time and my last dollar. I'll drive him back to England from which I wish I'd never brought him. I won't tell you not to see him and Mitzi, for you have been on intimate terms with them too long. But don't mention me. And, as an employee, as well as my best friend, I expect you to stop trying to get engagements for him.

"You tried to get him into vaudeville. Well, I blocked that, at least on some of the time. No, don't interrupt. I tell you I'm going to prevent Reynolds from getting any decent work in this country. Nobody'll take him after they learn the truth about how he double-crossed me. And before I'm through, I'll take his wife away from him. She'll be back where she belongs—in one of my companies."

Sam kept his word, at least to the extent of preventing Geoffrey and Mitzi from getting any good bookings. Finally they went into the small time vaudeville, playing from three to four shows a day, but using names other than their own. It was a fearful come-down for them. But they maintained a brave front, hoping that time would bring a better break in their fortunes. I saw them occasionally. The meetings were strained, and I believe all of us were glad when they were over.

HOWEVER, it was obvious to me that adversity had increased their love for each other. And it also had made a serious, thoughtful man of Geoff, whose great regret was that his follies had made the going hard for his wife. Despite Sam's injunction, I did persuade some of my friends to give them work.

I think, after a time, he must have learned of this. For he placed me in charge of a road show, bound for the Pacific Coast as a starting point, and with a route which would keep me on the road the better part of the year. For a

time I heard from Geoff and Mitzi. Then their letters ceased coming and I lost track of them.

It was not until the winter had set in in the East that a happy break came in my monotonous job of piloting the troupe through the week stands. The relief was a long telegram from Sam, stating that he was about to begin rehearsals on a new show, to open in New York about January first, and directing me to return at once to help him.

That Sam was glad to see me when I reached his office some days later there could be no doubt. For his welcome was the kind which comes from a man with few real friends. We talked about what had taken place in the big city during my absence and his plans for our immediate future. "I won't bother you with any of the work on the new show," he said finally. "You'll have enough to do looking after the theatres now running, while I give my time to the rehearsals. This time I'm going to have a sure-fire winner. One big flivver is all I can stand in a life-time.

"Oh, by the way," he continued, edging closer and with the kind of look in his eyes which I had learned to know meant mischief, "I've made good on one of my old promises."

"Yes?" I queried, without showing particular interest.

"I've finally persuaded Mitzi Karl to come back with me. She's to have a fine part in the new show."

AND Geoffrey?" I couldn't keep the eagerness out of my voice.

He shrugged. "Oh, let him stick around with the four-a-days. What I wanted was the girl, and I've got her. I don't know or care what arrangement she's made with him."

I asked no more questions. But Sam's information hurt me. If he had separated this couple, he had carried his vindictiveness to a point which I intended to resent later on, even if it caused a break in our business relations. There were some things too raw for me to swallow. But first I wanted to be sure of my ground. Learn what had occurred to make Mitzi take this step.

The day following, through a mutual friend, I got word to Geoff to come to my rooms, alone. When he appeared I scarcely knew him. His appearance indicated he had been quite ill, and in his manner I thought I detected the signs of a man who finally had been beaten. For a long time we talked, but dodged the question which he knew was responsible for my sending for him. At last he could stand the strain no longer.

"I know what you're after, Dan, and I'm going to tell you—everything. Mitzi is going back with Landau. I'm going to the devil, I guess. No, don't interrupt. There's been no break between Mitzi and me. She is the gamiest little woman on God's green earth. She still loves me and—I'd go to hell for her. But I won't keep her down any longer. And that's where she's been ever since—Well, we'll forget that.

"For months we've just scrimped along. Four performances a day, when we were working. It broke my heart to see that clever little girl slaving like that. But she never complained. Landau kept after her, repeatedly offering her good rôles at a big salary. She only laughed at his messengers. Then I was sick—for weeks. Dan, old man, we're about broke.

"A week ago came another offer from Landau. I persuaded her to take it. But

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only by arguing that it would keep us going until I could regain my health.

"Well?" I queried, as he paused.

"You understand, Dan. That was only my excuse for getting her back where she belongs. I'm going to stay around until after the opening, until she's made good."

"And then?"

"I don't know. I won't let her support me. Maybe I'll quit the stage. Everything's uncertain; only that I won't let her sacrifice herself any longer."

After a long talk and a dinner I felt certain I had put some heart back into him. And I made him promise he would make no move, following the opening of the new show, until he had consulted me. I clinched that pledge by assuring him I would get him a job of which he would not be ashamed.

After that I saw Mitzi, who was very enthusiastic over her improved prospects. And I helped bolster her nerve by telling her, once she had made herself solid on Broadway, I would find work for Geoff, so that they need not be separated until such time as she went on the road.

Thereafter I saw neither except at infrequent intervals, as my own labors kept me busy most of my waking hours. Once, along towards the middle of December, when Sam was in a fairly jovial mood because of the progress made at the rehearsals, I put in a plea that he ease up on Geoffrey.

"If you won't give him a lift, Sam, at least don't keep him from getting work from the other managers. You've got Mitzi, and that should even the score. You were handed a raw deal, but it's long enough past to forget it. Try and let a little of the holiday spirit percolate through your system."

He heard me through without the movement of a muscle. Then:

"The fact that the girl is back with me makes it more necessary than ever that Reynolds leave the country—take himself out of her life. He'd be a bad influence; might interfere with some of my plans. I'm through with him. And you'll oblige me by not speaking of him again."

Sam left the room, banging the door after him. I knew I'd played my last card for Geoffrey—at least as far as Landau was concerned—and lost.

* * * * *

The day before Christmas was an unusually hard one for me. Leila Landau, who had been spending the early winter weeks with friends in Florida, was returning to be with her father through the holidays. She was expected early the following morning. And Sam, for once, had taken a full day off from all work for the purpose of purchasing gifts for this one person who made life worth the living for him.

NOT that I cared a hang about holidays; except for the extra revenue they brought in at his box-offices. But Christmas and Leila's birthday were within a day of each other—this year she would be eighteen—and he was determined to celebrate the unusual occasion by giving her a costly remembrance, something which would far eclipse any of his previous gifts.

So, with my employer absent, I had to be on the jump from early morning until night, noting personally that everything in the local Landau play-houses was just as it should be for the certain throngs of the next day.

The first let-up in my labors did not

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an hour. Yes, baby, I'll be at the station to meet you—in the morning—with Danny. Good night."

But the forced strength which had held him suddenly gave way. As he dropped the receiver upon the hook, he sank into a chair, his head went down upon the hands crossed before him on the table, and he cried—cried as only a big, strong man can cry, a man to whom tears had been a stranger for many, many years.

It was one of those times when it was best to leave a person alone. I tiptoed from the room, closing the door behind me.

The labors of the day, the night's hours of awful terror had sapped my strength almost to the breaking point. And it was only in a sort of daze that I caught the sound of church bells, welcoming the new Christmas, as I let myself into my home and tumbled beneath the covers.

I don't know how long I had been asleep when the persistent ringing of the telephone bell at my bedside roused me. It was pitch dark. I snapped on the light, and noted it was but three o'clock as I took down the receiver.

"Hello, hello! Is this Dan Carey?" The query was from a woman.

"Yes. Who are you?"

"Oh, Dan, listen. This is Mitzi. And Geoffrey is here too."

"Well, I'm—"

"No, you're not, Dan. And don't be cross. Such a wonderful thing has happened—just a few minutes ago. Who do you think has been here?"

"Santa Claus," I said. And I tried to put all the sarcasm possible in my voice.

"No, foolish. But Samuel Landau!"

"What?"

"Honestly. And I never saw him like he was, all jokes and laughing. We had to dress and see him. And—he's going to take Geoffrey back, give him a good part in the show with me. I'll bet you had a hand in it, you old darling. I'll give you a big hug in the morning. And I'll tell you all the rest. Good night."

I HEARD the bang as she hung up. Then for a long time I sat thinking, half-stupified with amazement. For the significance of Sam's early morning visit, and the why of it—which he and I alone knew—was more startling than anything which had occurred in that day of upsets and surprises. Finally, for sheer joy, I let out a whoop and sent the alarm clock spinning with a well placed smash.

I spent the next half hour smoking. Then I again placed the receiver to my ear and gave the private number which I knew would connect me with the telephone in Sam's bedroom.

The wait was brief. A shaky "Hello" came from the other end.

"That you, Sam?" I bellowed.

"Yes. Who are you?"

"Dan. Whod' you think?"

"Well, what the devil do you mean by waking me up at this hour of the night? You know I need sleep—after what I've been through."

"Shut up, you old faker. Mitzi called me on the phone—right after you left her. Told me all about you playing Santa Claus. I had to thank you. Sam, you're an ace."

For a second or so there was dead silence. Then, "Dan, I've taken a lot from you for old time's sake. But, if you ever wake me up at this time of night again—I'll fire you, so help me. Now go back to bed—and a Merry Christmas—stupid."

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Even the active life on a ranch in Western Canada was not too much for this new appliance—Allan F. Stinson found relief and cure thru its use. In spite of long hunting trips thru the deep snow and wooded sections in the winter and taking care of his ranch in the summer, Mr. Stinson, who lives at Erickson, B. C., has had no recurrence of his rupture. "I was completely cured by your appliance and it was so light and comfortable that I didn't realize I was wearing it," he writes in his grateful letter.



In just seven months, H. A. Osborne, a steam fitter, living in Ames, Iowa, was freed of rupture. Mr. Osborne says, "I wore your appliance seven months and was completely cured. I can lift now just as hard as I ever could and it doesn't affect me in any way. I wore other makes of trusses for several years without any good effects."

THESE PEOPLE—good, substantial citizens—property owners, citizens of consequence in their communities—have been cured of rupture. Here are their letters and pictures. Medical examination or the daily grind of hard work has proved the effectiveness of the method they praise so highly. Thousands of other rupture sufferers in all sections of the world have written, telling of their complete freedom after a comparatively short time.

This new appliance, with its soft, light surface—soft as the skin itself, carefully and scientifically draws the separated sections together and allows free circulation; no gouging pads, no steel bands or heavy hoops—nothing enters into its construction that would injure the delicate flesh of the smallest child.

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You can wear it, try it, experiment with it; a study of its construction will show you how it heals. This offer is made so that you can prove to your satisfaction that this is the most effective method of healing rupture known to medical science.

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A real test—a chance to actually try it and its effect—in your particular case is better than all explanations. A real test is better even than the real testimonials which accompany this article—for you can actually see how it heals, how it feels in your case and how it has brought health to thousands.

This appliance was perfected by specialists who devoted a great amount of time to the study of the cause, retention and cure

of rupture. They experimented until they found an appliance which retained the rupture safely and surely, yet, at the same time, allowed the separated muscle fibers to be drawn closer—that they might grow together again.

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Thousands of people have used this appliance—literally thousands have written, telling of their absolute freedom from rupture troubles after a few months.

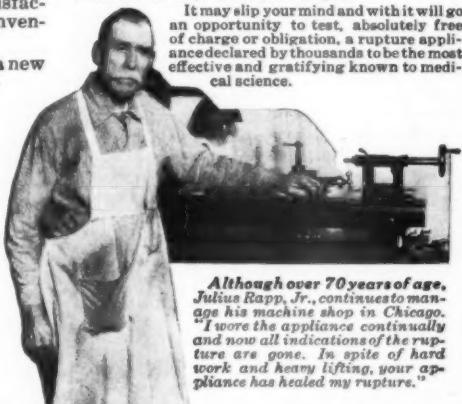
So don't miss this opportunity to make the acquaintance of the most logical, scientific, comfortable and clean way to heal rupture.

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